

The background of the cover is a photograph of a military aircraft, likely a B-26 Superfortress, flying over a dense forest. The aircraft is dropping a large firebomb, which is creating a massive, bright orange fireball and a thick plume of smoke that streaks across the sky. The scene is dramatic and emphasizes the military's role in wildfire response.

THE AMERICAN Legion

www.legion.org

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The magazine for a strong America

ON THE FIRE LINE


The U.S. military as
wildfire response force

THE NATIONAL ANTHEM AT 200

Meet National
Commander
Mike Helm

*Why midterm
elections matter*

FOR GOD AND COUNTRY SINCE 1919

A large, solid white rectangular box occupies the bottom right portion of the cover, likely intended for a subscription offer or additional information.



USAA is proud to be the
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The Medicare Annual Enrollment Period Starts October 15.

When it comes to Medicare, some seniors are uninformed to make changes to their coverage. If you're one of those folks who is uncertain about all the choices out there, take heart. Making some adjustments to your plan can be a good thing!

Doing just a little bit of homework could potentially save you big bucks, and maybe even a few headaches when changes take effect on January 1, 2015.

Let's take a closer look at what you can do.

Change to or from a Medicare Advantage plan. With a Medicare Advantage plan (known as Part C), you normally pay a monthly premium and receive your original Medicare (Parts A & B) benefits through a private insurer. These plans typically give you some extra coverage (dental, prescriptions, etc.) and help you pay less out of pocket than if you just went with Medicare Parts A & B.

Since the coverage provided by these plans can vary widely, as can your annual out-of-pocket expenses, it pays to shop around. On the down side, your choice of physicians may be restricted depending on the type of Medicare Advantage plan you have. If choosing your physicians is important to you, Medicare Parts A & B paired with a Medicare Supplement Insurance product may be the right solution for you.

"Since the coverage provided by these plans can vary widely, as can your annual out-of-pocket expenses, it pays to shop around."

*– J.J. Montanaro is a retired Lt. Colonel in the U.S. Army Reserve and
 CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™
 with USAA Financial Planning Services.*

Switch from one Medicare Advantage plan to another. Even if you already have a Medicare Advantage plan, you may be able to find a better one. You could select a higher-rated plan or move to one that offers lower monthly premiums, copayments or a lower annual out-of-pocket cap.

Or you may find a plan that adds additional coverage, like prescription drugs, dental or vision, that your current plan doesn't offer. This is helpful because what might have been the "right" plan for you last year may not be the right plan for you now. Ideally, you can find the same or better coverage you have today with lower overall costs.

Join, drop or change a Medicare Prescription Drug Plan (PDP). With a PDP (known as Part D), you may join, drop or change if you have original Medicare, your Medicare Advantage plan does not cover prescription drugs or you already have an individual PDP but want to explore other PDPs. While the general PDP rules are the same for all insurers, there can be significant differences between plans.

Monthly premiums, deductibles, copayments and even restrictions on individual drugs may vary.

To help you choose a PDP that's best for you, make a list of your medications and spend some time with the Plan Finder at medicare.gov. You can enter your medications and compare deductibles, copayments and overall estimated costs as well as ratings of different plans.

If you spend some time on the calculator, you may find it's surprisingly easy to use. The goal: Find the best coverage and costs for your particular prescription regimen.

Health-care costs can add up quickly if you don't have the right coverage. Don't be intimidated. Instead, be proactive and do your homework and, come January, enjoy peace of mind. ◆

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Legion

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ON THE COVER

A C-130 Hercules assigned to the Wyoming Air National Guard's 153rd Airlift Wing lays a line of fire retardant against the Waldo Canyon Fire near Colorado Springs, Colo., on June 27, 2012.

U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Stephany D. Richards

Brooklawn, N.J., Post 72 center fielder Peter Farlow, center, and his teammates react to winning the American Legion Baseball World Series for the second year in a row at Veterans Field, Keeter Stadium, in Shelby, N.C., on Aug. 19.

Photo by Lucas Carter

The American Legion Magazine, a leader among national general-interest publications, is published monthly by The American Legion for its 2.3 million members. These wartime veterans, working through 14,000 community-level posts, dedicate themselves to God and Country and traditional American values; strong national security; adequate and compassionate care for veterans, their widows and orphans; community service; and the wholesome development of our nation's youth.



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Myles Eckert, Gold Star son

When I saw this cover and the article by Cameran Richardson (August), my heart stopped, as it does every time I see the words "Gold Star." As president of the American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., Department of Florida and a member of the American Legion Auxiliary, I can't thank you enough for your article.

The explanation of the Gold Star pins is especially important, because as individuals we are not readily recognizable, even wearing our pins. Educating the public about our nation's Gold Star mothers and families is an ongoing process. With the support of the American Legion Family, I know there is never an explanation necessary. You have embraced the Gold Star Family.

— Jo Ann Maitland, Stuart, Fla.



'All the Horrors of All the Ages'

The article by Alan W. Dowd (August) is well-reasoned and interesting. But from the perspective of classic military strategy and the constitutional requirement of two-thirds senatorial approval of any peace treaty, Woodrow Wilson's 14-point proposal that included "peace without victory" and an armistice without German surrender and occupation was opposed not only by Gen. Pershing but by enough senators to prevent its passage. The resulting armistice left Germany with its army and Reichstag, and Adolf Hitler with the ability to convert the Weimar Republic into a totalitarian dictatorship.

As commander in chief of the Army, Wilson had no overall strategic objective, and his premature peace proposal left the futures of the European powers undecided, the citizens of each war-weary and saddled with huge debts. Meanwhile, Congress showed little interest in the League of Nations and a novel approach to settlement of disputes and maintenance of international peace.

Each of our successful wars was undertaken with an overall strategic objective that was ultimately carried out. Recent history demonstrates that the United States should not commit itself to war without such an objective and a declaration of war by Congress.

— Charles E. Wright, Lincoln, Neb.

'Foreign-Born American Heroes'

I enjoyed reading Al Manchester's article (August) about foreign-born recipients of the Medal of Honor. I wonder how many were naturalized citizens of the country for which they fought and some died. To those who were not, being granted citizenship would have been a greater honor than receiving the medal.

It grieves me to know that many served and died without being granted citizenship. This policy smacks of the racism that denied them honors at the time of their heroic acts.

My father, born in Italy, was awarded his citizenship while serving with the 56th Infantry in France during World War I.

— Marcello J. Rossano, Alvin, Texas

Al Manchester honored eight great warriors and recipients of the Medal of Honor who were not U.S. natives. There were many foreign-born Medal of Honor recipients, especially in the period from the Civil War through World War II, many of whom were not citizens. Also, due to many only having recently immigrated prior to military service, identifying them as being from a certain U.S. state could not be done because of insufficient records. The Medal of Honor Grove created by the Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge, Pa., recognizes these heroes with a special memorial and identifies them only by country of origin. Consistent with the ethnic heritage of our United States, the most numerous were from Ireland (65) and Germany (34).

— Brian O. Remmey, Lancaster, Pa.

While I was enthralled with the stories of valor of these brave men fighting for a land not that of their birth, I would like to point out that this phenomenon is far older than what transpired in the fields of France and Belgium in the Great War. I am a department commander for Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War. Of the more than 40,000 British North Americans (Canadians) who joined the Union armies, more than 5,000 gave their last full measure of devotion to the causes of union and freedom. Three attained the rank of major general, and at least 34 were awarded the Medal of Honor for heroism in battle.

— David M. Lamb, Urbandale, Iowa

'Last of the Code Talkers'

Henry Howard's article (August) brought tears to my eyes. What wonderful men they were, and to think that when they came home they could not talk about what they did.

— Myrna Smith, Miamisburg, Ohio

Although the Navajo are the most recognized, many other tribes had men in this operation. I understand these soldiers were Army. The last survivor from South Dakota, Clarence Wolf Guts, passed away last winter. He had a cousin, Iver Crow Eagle Sr., who was also a code talker.

— Harley Furrey, Winner, S.D.

'Serve those who served'

Kudos to Matt Grills for his article on Fisher House (August). In 2007, I was detailed to President George W. Bush's Commission on Care for America's Returning Wounded Warriors to assist on logistical issues. There I met Kenneth Fisher, one of the main members of the commission. I was amazed by his support of the U.S. military – active duty, reserve, National Guard, retirees and family members. Mr. Fisher would give his own shirt off his back if it could help a veteran. The steps he took to help wounded warriors were from the heart, not an attempt to get on the front pages of newspapers. Never did I see him take credit for the Fisher Houses or ask for donations. Once I became aware of what the organization does for veterans and their families, I became a strong supporter.

— Doug Kahn, Gettysburg, Pa.

Select committee on Benghazi

In answer to the typical Democratic response from Rep. Steven Horsford (Big Issues, August) to the tragic Benghazi consulate attack, I would direct one question to him: why hasn't all information on the attack been released by President Obama two years later? Americans would like to know exactly what happened, as well as the families of the four victims. The latter group has repeatedly been misled in learning what happened.

— Don Mazen, Glendale, Calif.

A system worth saving

National Commander Dan Dellinger makes a critical point that seems totally forgotten in the management of VA medical services (Commander's Message, August). "Adequate care for veterans who returned home changed by war was then, and is now, the essential purpose of our organization," he writes. VA's primary medical mission is supposed to be the same: to assist those who return home *changed by war*. But over the years that mission has been enlarged again and again until, today, those who return home changed by war compete for VA services with hundreds of thousands of veterans who wore the uniform for relatively short periods of time and have never been near a combat zone. The cheating and dishonesty that have come to light in the administration of today's VA are the results of VA being given a mission impossible.

— Tom Macdonald, Carmel Valley, Calif.

THE AMERICAN LEGION MAGAZINE WELCOMES YOUR OPINIONS

Include your hometown and a daytime phone number for verification. All letters published are subject to editing.

Due to the volume of mail received, not every letter can be acknowledged.

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BOB SKINNER

Bob Skinner is determined to increase the visibility of veterans. "One of my personal goals, as commander of the local American Legion, is to get as many veterans in schools as I can so that kids see veterans as people, not something they read about in a book," Skinner says. "We need to learn from history. A lot of that history is living in veterans."

Even the youngest students are responding.

"I was walking down the hall at a school on Veterans Day last year, and a little boy comes up to me and salutes me and says, 'Mister, you're my hero,'" Skinner says. "It chokes you up."

Skinner's Post 56 in Idaho Falls is the community's go-to place for veterans, whether the need is a ceremonial team for a graveside service or an honor guard for Memorial Day. The post did nearly two dozen presentations last Veterans Day alone – one reason it received the Idaho Falls Chamber of Commerce Community Service Award a few years ago, and why membership is flourishing. "Our biggest recruiting tool is being out there," Skinner says.

The post is best known for organizing Idaho's oldest rodeo, the War Bonnet Roundup, of which Skinner is chairman. Started by veterans over a century ago, it's been run by the Legion for all but three years since the 1920s. Every evening includes special recognition for veterans. When a pickup full of veterans from World War II, Korea, Vietnam, the Gulf War, Iraq and Afghanistan entered the arena on the final night of this year's rodeo, the audience rose with shouts and applause.

"That's what it's all about," Skinner says, "making our veterans proud they served their country."

BRANCH OF SERVICE Navy (1968-1976),
Navy Reserve (1978-2007)

MOS Nuclear machinist mate, engineering
duty officer

RANK AT DISCHARGE Captain

AMERICAN LEGION POST Bonneville Post 56,
Idaho Falls, Idaho

YEARS IN THE AMERICAN LEGION 30

VETERANS ACTIVITIES

- Post commander (2008-present)
- State vice commander, Area C (2013-present)
- Post 56 executive board chairman (2008-present)
- Bonneville County Veterans Memorial Commission chairman (2008-present)
- Military Officers Association of America – Eastern Idaho board member

Watch an interview with Bob Skinner online:
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Photo by Todd Trigsted

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Renew the Export-Import Bank



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Rep. Denny Heck, D-Wash.

■ Heck is a member of the House Financial Services Committee.

While U.S. manufacturing has changed dramatically over time, we still do a darn good job of making the most complex and extraordinary items ever invented. The tractors, planes, speakers and rockets built here are unequalled by the rest of the world. These middle-class jobs invigorate our communities as we continue to recover from recession.

The Export-Import Bank of the United States is one tool to protect and expand skilled manufacturing here at home.

It goes where no other bank will go, allowing U.S. companies access to new markets in underdeveloped nations, providing loans and guarantees to ensure the transactions are legitimate and fully paid.

Although the Ex-Im Bank is technically a government agency, it is not funded by taxpayer dollars. Instead, it charges fees to foreign companies buying U.S. goods to cover all its costs. Last year, the Ex-Im Bank surplus from these fees reduced the deficit by \$1 billion.

For veteran-owned STAC, Inc., in Sumner, Wash., the Ex-Im Bank is a reliable partner providing the protection needed to sell goods beyond our nation's borders. Nearly 90 percent of the bank's transactions go to small businesses. In a perfect world, private markets would provide financing to companies like STAC. In the real world, we have a shortage of private loans available for small businesses, underdeveloped countries and long-lived expensive goods.

When we neglect manufacturing, foreign competitors undercut us, whole industries move overseas and we run a massive trade deficit. Every other developed nation has an export credit authority. Ending ours is tantamount to unilateral disarmament.



OPPOSE

Rep. Jeb Hensarling, R-Texas

■ Hensarling is chairman of the House Financial Services Committee.

The Export-Import Bank of the United States funnels billions of taxpayer dollars to foreign corporations in countries such as China, Russia and Saudi Arabia. So Ex-Im isn't just corporate welfare; it's *foreign* corporate welfare.

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Ex-Im says sending taxpayer money to foreign interests supports U.S. jobs. But the government's chief auditor reports that it doesn't raise overall employment. And the CEO of Delta Air Lines testified that Ex-Im has destroyed at least 7,500 jobs in the U.S. airline industry alone.

Ex-Im also claims it doesn't cost taxpayers a dime. But if it followed fair accounting rules rather than government ones, its ledgers would show that it costs taxpayers \$200 million each year. And several Ex-Im officials are under investigation for taking kickbacks to steer federal contracts to favored companies, *The Wall Street Journal* reports.

A better plan to make our exporters and our economy more competitive is with fundamental tax reform, regulatory relief, liability reform and U.S. energy independence.

THE HEART OF THE ISSUE

Supporters say the Export-Import Bank protects skilled manufacturing at home by helping U.S. exporters compete globally. Opponents say it fails to raise employment, costs taxpayers millions and benefits only politically connected corporations.

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Media Bakery

Skin cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer in the United States, yet most cases are preventable. Despite recent efforts to address risk factors, skin cancer rates continue to rise, according to a new report from the U.S. Surgeon General's office.

The three most common types of skin cancers are basal cell carcinoma, squamous cell carcinoma and melanoma, the report states. More than 80 percent of the 5 million American adults treated for skin cancer each year have a non-melanoma disease, including 7 percent of those 65 or older. Recent Medicare data show that the number of procedures used to treat these skin cancers has increased by 16 percent.

Melanoma of the skin is the fifth most common cancer for men and the seventh most common for women. White men 65 or older have the highest incidence and death rates for melanoma.

Not only is skin cancer the most common type of cancer, it is also the most rapidly increasing type. For the past 30 years, skin cancers have increased by about 3 percent each year, according to the Veterans Health Administration. One out of every five people in the United States will develop skin cancer sometime during his or her life, including about half of those who live to 65.

Veterans who served in Vietnam may be at increased risk if they were exposed to Agent Orange. This herbicide, widely used during the Vietnam War to clear foliage in the jungle, contained the cancer-causing chemical dioxin. A recent analysis of the medical records of 100 men who joined the Agent Orange Registry at the VA hospital in Washington found that they had non-melanoma invasive

Help your heart out

The American Heart Association has some tips for heart-healthy dining:

- **Avoid ordering extras such as cocktails, appetizers, bread and butter.**
- **Ask for butter, cream cheese, salad dressings, sauces and gravies on the side. Avoid dishes with excess amounts.**
- **Instead of fried foods, choose baked, broiled or grilled options.**
- **Be choosy at the salad bar. Fresh greens, raw vegetables, fresh fruits and beans are good options; cheeses and marinated and pasta salads are not.**



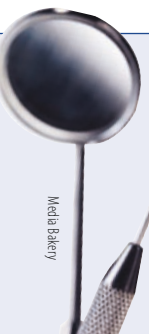
Media Bakery

- **Ask if the chef can prepare your order with little or no butter or oil.**
- **Ask how menu items are prepared and what ingredients are used, including what kinds of oils are used in preparation.**
- **Ask about smaller-portion options. If these aren't available, ask for a to-go box when you order and save half the entrée for later.**
- **Ask for healthy substitutions, such as a baked potato rather than French fries.**
- **Fresh fruit, sherbet, gelatin and angel food cake are great alternatives to fat- and cream-laden desserts.**

Pain-free dentistry?

One in three U.S. adults didn't visit the dentist last year, many of them fearing pain, Gallup reports. But a new technique could mean pain-free tooth care.

As *Dentistry Today* reports, King's College London is developing a technique that uses "electrically accelerated and enhanced remineralization ... to heal teeth without drilling and filling cavities." The procedure uses a small electrical current to push the mineral to the tooth from the damaged site, and could eventually be adopted by dental practices.



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Living Well is designed to provide general information. It is not intended to be, nor is it, medical advice. Readers should consult their physicians when they have health problems.

skin cancer rates twice as high as same-aged men in the general population, although they had no increased risk of malignant melanoma. VA set up the registry in 1978, which provides all veterans exposed to the herbicide with a comprehensive health examination, free of charge at nearly any VA medical center.

Ken Fuchs served in Vietnam from 1968 to 1970, mostly in security, building roads and bridges as he traveled through mountain passes. Lesions appeared around his left eye in 2004 but he didn't think it was skin cancer, he says. In 2012, Fuchs developed four white spots oozing around his eye. A doctor at the Tulsa, Okla., Dermatology Clinic immediately recognized the spots as slow-growing, advanced basal cell carcinoma.

Surgery was not an option because the cancer was too close to Fuchs' eye; the doctor recommended a new drug, Erivedge, to slow down the growth, and the skin cancer cleared up in one month.

The good news is that skin cancer can be prevented, and if caught early is almost 100 percent curable. The first step is a skin exam that looks for spots abnormal in color, size, shape or texture, as well as skin biopsies. Chances of

recovery depend on the stage of the cancer and the type of treatment.

According to the National Cancer Institute, treatment options depend on the stage of the cancer (whether it has spread deeper into the skin or to other places in the body), the type of cancer, the size of the tumor and what part of the body it affects.

Five types of standard treatment are used: surgery, such as Mohs micrographic surgery to cut the tumor from the skin in thin layers, or cryosurgery to freeze and destroy abnormal tissue; radiation therapy to kill cancer cells or keep them from growing; chemotherapy to stop the growth of cancer cells, by either killing them or stopping them from dividing; photodynamic therapy that uses a drug and a laser light to kill cancer cells; and biologic therapy that stimulates your own immune system to fight the cancer.

VA recommends a cancer-related checkup, including a skin exam, every four years for those ages 20 to 40, and every year at 40 and older.

Mark L. Fuerst is a Brooklyn-based health and fitness writer.

Tips to protect yourself from the sun

Sun protection helps prevent the harmful effects of exposure, including sunburn, skin cancer, premature skin aging and eye damage. For ideal sun protection:

- Wear tightly woven protective clothing that adequately covers your arms, torso and legs.
- Wear a hat that provides adequate shade to your whole head.
- Seek shade whenever possible.
- Avoid outdoor activities during periods of peak sunlight (midday).
- Use sunscreen even in combination with other forms of sun protection.

More settled travel

World travelers with apprehension – or experience – of unpleasant food encounters in far-flung destinations can now

breathe a little easier. In April, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention released a smartphone app called “Can I Eat This?”

According to LiveScience.com, the app “asks users to select the country they’re visiting and answer a few simple questions about the item they are thinking of consuming,” such as where it was purchased, its packaging and if it contains ice made from local tap

water. The app then offers CDC recommendations on whether to consume or dispose of an item.

An estimated 10 million travelers each year contract what is known as “travelers’ diarrhea,” “Montezuma’s revenge” and other colorful euphemisms.

Stress solutions

Is your stress spreading to your kids? WebMD reports that “stress is contagious between children and their caregivers,” with those as young as 12 months mirroring their mother’s stress responses.

Twenty percent of children suffer from chronic stress. Warning signs include frequent emotional meltdowns, increased anger or fatigue, irritability, headaches or stomachaches, poor sleep patterns and frequent nightmares.

WebMD encourages parents to learn stress-handling techniques and model them in their day-to-day behavior for their children.

“If you can deal with your stress appropriately, they’ll realize it’s not a sign of a catastrophe – that stress is something you can deal with,” says Friedemann Schaub, author of “The Fear & Anxiety Solution.”

Physicians and psychologists suggest positive thinking, healthy eating, exercising, unplugging from technology and even sticking to these habits during low-stress periods, helping create “a pattern of healthy coping mechanisms,” Schaub says.



Media Bakery

A landscape photograph showing a dry, rocky shoreline in the foreground. A body of water, possibly a lake or reservoir, is visible in the middle ground, reflecting the sky. In the background, there are low, hazy mountains under a clear blue sky. The overall tone is somber and desolate.

I AM ONE OF MILLIONS OF PEOPLE
WHO HAVE **HEPATITIS C.**

Sometimes hepatitis C (Hep C) can feel forgotten. After all, it's slow moving, with symptoms that may not appear for years. No wonder why you push it to the back of your mind and forget it. But there's something that shouldn't be forgotten. Hep C is a serious disease that affects over three million people. And left untreated, it can lead to liver damage and potentially even liver cancer.

The good news is, you haven't been forgotten. In fact, there's actually never been



FORGET MENOT

a better time to rethink your Hep C and talk to your doctor. Because people like you may benefit from scientific advancements in Hep C. Advances that could help you move on from Hep C.

Visit **[HepcHope.com](https://www.HepcHope.com)** or call 844-4-HepcHope to find out more about Hep C and your treatment options. And register for your personalized guide to help prepare you for a conversation with your gastroenterologist.



More to VA reform law than access cards

BY TOM PHILPOTT

The Veterans Access, Choice and Accountability Act of 2014 is a rare work product from our bitterly divided Congress: a genuine compromise.

Aimed at easing an access-to-care crisis found across a large swath of the VA health-care system, the reform package almost didn't happen. But in the end, lawmakers who thundered for months about inept VA leadership and corrupt bureaucrats betraying veterans feared leaving town in August for a five-week hiatus without a final reform deal.

The most talked-about feature of the law President Obama signed Aug. 7 is the Veterans Choice Card, but it could be the least useful of the newly minted tools to help veterans gain more timely or convenient care.

Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., insisted on the card, and Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., chairman of the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs, needed his backing to win Republican support for a larger reform bill than the House sought. Initially, the card was to guarantee veterans access to civilian care for up to two years if they lived more than 40 miles from a VA medical facility or faced waits for care longer than 30 days. When the cost of that promise topped \$40 billion, House-Senate negotiators pared it.

The guarantee now will apply only to veterans enrolled in the VA health-care system on or before Aug. 1, 2014, or those newly enrolled after that date who served on active duty in a combat theater within the previous five years.

Also, the card won't be a golden ticket to use local physicians at VA's expense. It only must show the veteran's name, an ID number and VA contact information, which civilian providers can use to verify that specific care or services are authorized. VA must authorize such care, likely on a case-by-case basis. Care that VA can't deliver will likely be funneled into networks of civilian providers with which VA has contracted to provide backup care.

Until VA decides more precisely how it will use the card, new VA Secretary Robert McDonald wasn't mentioning it in early speeches highlighting steps taken to address the access crisis.

Here are features of the new law likely to have more impact:

- VA gets an additional \$5 billion over the next three years to hire more physicians, nurses and other medical staff and to improve VA's infrastructure to deliver care.
- VA can tap, as needed, a special \$10 billion Veterans Choice Fund over the next three years to buy more care in the private sector while building the internal capability to meet demand, McDonald said.
- VA will lease 27 more clinics across 18 states and in Puerto Rico to secure more space and treat more patients.
- VA has new authority to remove or demote senior executives based on poor performance or misconduct, and can use an expedited



Getty

and limited appeal process for employees disciplined under this authority.

- VA is limited to providing no more than \$40 million a year in executive bonuses through 2024.
- Congress will establish a commission on care to evaluate access throughout the VA system.

House negotiators accepted two features from the Senate version of the bill that affect GI Bill education benefits:

- One will require state-run colleges and universities to offer users of the Post-9/11 GI Bill and the Montgomery GI Bill in-state tuition rates, saving 3,800 students a year thousands of dollars in out-of-pocket costs. The change doesn't take effect until fall 2015. Twenty-eight states already grant in-state tuition rates to nonresident veterans.
- The Marine Gunnery Sergeant John David Fry Scholarship program has been expanded to provide the Post-9/11 GI Bill to the surviving spouse of any servicemember who dies on active duty. This is retroactive to "line-of-duty" deaths back to Sept. 11, 2001. Children of servicemembers who die on active duty for any reason short of misconduct have qualified for the Post-9/11 GI Bill under the Fry program since 2009.

Tom Philpott has been covering military personnel and veterans issues for more than 30 years.

How to Tell Time Like a Man

Our digital-analog hybrid has two sides... tough and tougher. Get it now for an unbelievable \$59!

Your watch shouldn't cost more than your car. It should look and feel like a power tool and not a piece of bling. Wearing it shouldn't make you think twice about swinging a hammer or changing a tire. A real man's timepiece needs to be ready for anything. But that's just my opinion. If you agree, maybe you're ready for the **Stauer Centurion Hybrid**. Use your **Exclusive Insider Promotional Code** below and I'll send it to you today for **ONLY \$59**.

This watch doesn't do dainty. And neither do I. Call me old-fashioned, but I want my boots to be leather, my tires to be deep-tread monsters, and my steak thick and rare. Inspiration for a man's watch should come from things like fast cars, firefighters and power tools. And if you want to talk beauty, then let's discuss a 428 cubic inch V8.

Did I mention the \$59 price tag? This is a LOT of machine for not a lot of money. The **Stauer Centurion Hybrid** sports a heavy-duty alloy body, chromed and detailed with a rotating bezel that allows you to track direction. The luminous hour and minute hands mean you can keep working into the night. And the dual digital displays give this watch a hybrid ability. The LCD windows displays the time, day and date, includes a stopwatch function, and features a bright green electro-luminescent backlight. We previously offered the **Centurion** for \$199, but with the exclusive promotional code it's yours for **ONLY \$59!**

No matter what, this watch can keep up. Thanks to the Stauer 30-day Money Back Guarantee, you've got time to prove it. If you're not totally satisfied, return it for a full refund of the purchase price. You also get a 2-year replacement guarantee on both movements. But I have a feeling the only problem you'll have is deciding whether to keep the **Stauer Centurion** on your dresser or tucked inside your toolbox.



"I work in the surveying and construction industry... This is my work horse watch and I am proud to wear it."

— C.S. from Fort Worth, TX



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BY KEN OLSEN

The row of burning houses looked like a war zone, Lt. Col. Luke Thompson thought as he flew his C-130 low over the Possum Kingdom blaze and dropped thousands of gallons of retardant in the path of the flames. He'd never seen anything like it in 15 years of fighting wildfires.

"We were all stunned from seeing the devastation," says Thompson, chief of aerial firefighting for the 302nd Airlift Wing and a veteran of five deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan. But that 2011 Texas blaze was merely a taste of fires to come. The next two summers, Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve C-130 tankers battled to save homes near Colorado Springs from equally destructive wildfires. "It's gut-wrenching to see any home burning," says Thompson, who is stationed at Peterson Air Force Base, "but even more so in your own neighborhoods."

Although it's unusual for servicemembers to be on fire lines so close to home, the military is perhaps the longest serving wildfire force in the American West. In the late 1800s, the Army was often the only federal wildfire crew. Today, the military is a key surge force when the U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service and other federal


wildland fire managers are stretched too thin.

"They are vital to our efforts," says John Segar of the National Interagency Fire Center in Boise, Idaho, which coordinates the nation's wildfire response. Without the military's assistance, including the air tankers the Guard and reserve fly, more acreage and homes would go up in smoke.

Their role is expected to become even more critical as the U.S. Forest Service projects a 50 to 100 percent increase in wildfires by the middle of the century because of climate change. For seasoned Guard and reserve pilots providing critical aerial assistance, wildfires are the most difficult challenges they face at the controls of airplanes.

"It's probably the most intense flying I've done in my life," says Col. Jerry Champlin of the Wyoming Air National Guard's 153rd Airlift Wing, who has also deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan. "Especially when you are dropping at 150 feet in the mountains with a fire sitting alongside of you ... trying to put the retardant exactly where the guys on the ground need it, trying to avoid the other aircraft."

And there's no computer assistance, Thompson says. "It may be one of the few things left in aviation where it's all just eyeballs and stick and rudder."



A Modular Airborne Fire Fighting System (MAFFS)-equipped C-130 departs the Black Forest fire after dropping fire retardant in northern El Paso County, Colo., on June 12, 2013, as an Army Chinook helicopter helps by scooping water. The 302nd Airlift Wing supported firefighting efforts through a request from the National Interagency Fire Center in Boise, Idaho. Photo courtesy Travis Leland

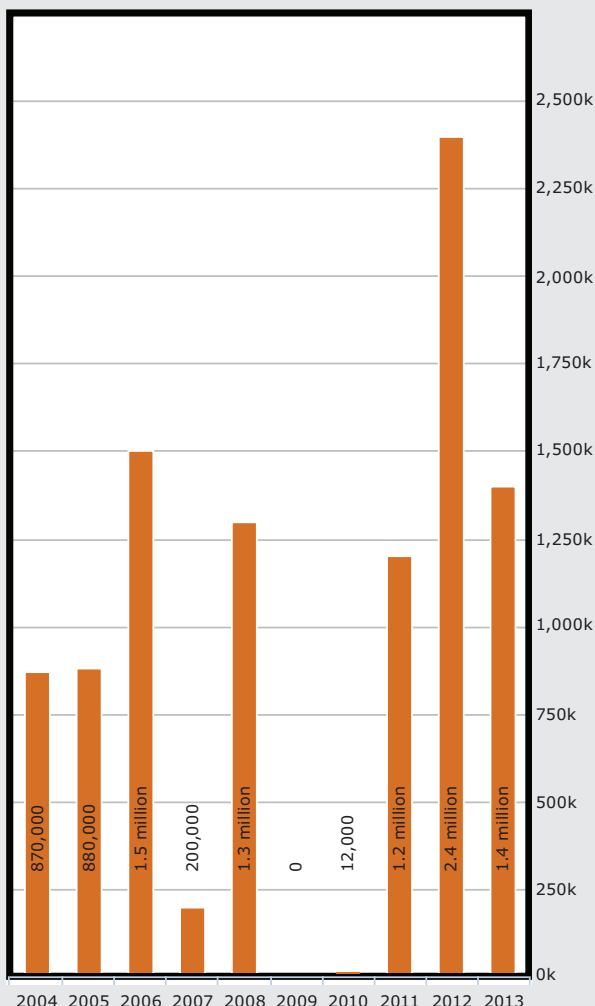


For more than a century, the U.S. military has provided critical support battling blazes in the West.

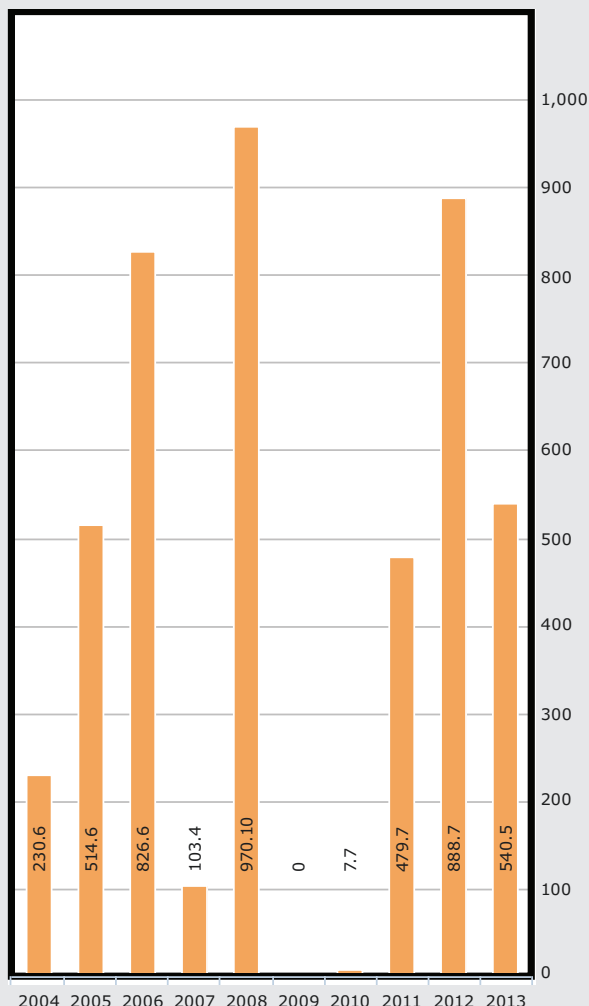
FIRE FIGHT

IN THEIR OWN BACKYARD

Number of gallons of retardant dropped by specially equipped C-130s flown by the Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve



Number of firefighting hours flown by C-130 pilots and crews



Source: National Interagency Fire Center

YELLOWSTONE LEGACY The U.S. military has a storied firefighting tradition. The 1st U.S. Cavalry became the nation's first paid wildland firefighters soon after arriving in Yellowstone National Park in August 1886. Soon the military was trying to prevent wildfires by ordering visitors to stay in designated campgrounds and expelling those who didn't douse their campfires. By 1890, troops were also patrolling and fighting fires in the newly established Yosemite, Sequoia and General Grant national parks.

Four thousand soldiers were summoned to fight the Great Northern Rockies fires of 1910 and restore order across Idaho and Montana, says Lincoln Bramwell, chief historian of the U.S. Forest Service. Just five years old at the time, the agency had fewer than

1,000 employees – far too few to deal with some 1,700 fires that charred more than 3 million acres.

By World War I, Army biplanes were being used for fire reconnaissance. The military liaison to the fledgling U.S. Forest Service was Henry H. “Hap” Arnold, who commanded the Army Air Forces during World War II. The agency teamed up with the Air Force in the late 1940s to experiment with the use of surplus planes to drop retardant on wildfires. And in 1971, the first airplane outfitted with a Modular Airborne Fire Fighting System (MAFFS) – pressurized retardant tanks that can convert a cargo plane into an air tanker – made the first drop on the Romero fire in California's Los Padres National Forest.

See **FIRE** on page 23

MY NAME IS

M-I-K-E

AND I HAVE

C-O-P-D

AND I TAKE

B-R-E-O



BREO ELLIPTA can help improve your breathing.

- Once-daily BREO helps increase airflow from the lungs for a full 24 hours. Your results may vary.
- In patients with a history of COPD flare-ups, BREO helps reduce the risk of future flare-ups. This is when symptoms are worse for several days and require steroids (oral or injectable), antibiotics, and/or a hospital stay. BREO is not for use to treat sudden symptoms of COPD and won't replace a rescue inhaler.

Talk to your doctor about BREO, and visit myBREO.com or call 1-800-600-BREO (2736) to get your first full prescription free.*

(COPD is Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease)

APPROVED USES

BREO ELLIPTA is approved for adults with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), including chronic bronchitis, emphysema, or both. BREO ELLIPTA is a prescription medicine that is used long term as 1 inhalation 1 time each day to improve symptoms of COPD for better breathing and to reduce the number of flare-ups (the worsening of your COPD symptoms for several days). BREO is not for use to treat sudden symptoms of COPD and won't replace a rescue inhaler. BREO is not for the treatment of asthma.

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION

- **BREO ELLIPTA is only approved for use in COPD. BREO is NOT approved for use in asthma.**
- **People with asthma who take long-acting beta₂-adrenergic agonist (LABA) medicines, such as vilanterol (one of the medicines in BREO), have an increased risk of death from asthma problems. It is not known if LABA medicines increase the risk of death in people with COPD.**
- **Call your healthcare provider if breathing problems worsen over time while using BREO.**
- **Get emergency medical care if** your breathing problems worsen quickly, or if you use your rescue inhaler but it does not relieve your breathing problems.
- **Do not use BREO to treat sudden symptoms of COPD.** Always have a rescue inhaler with you to treat sudden symptoms.
- **BREO is not for the treatment of asthma. It is not known if BREO is safe and effective in people with asthma.**
- Do not use BREO if you have severe allergy to milk proteins or any of the ingredients in BREO. Ask your healthcare provider if you are not sure.
- **Do not** use BREO more often than prescribed.
- **Do not take BREO with other medicines that contain a LABA for any reason. Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take and about all of your health conditions.**
- **BREO can cause serious side effects, including:**
 - **pneumonia.** People with COPD have a higher chance of getting pneumonia. BREO may increase the chance of getting pneumonia. Call your healthcare provider if you notice any of the following symptoms: increase in mucus (sputum) production; change in mucus color; fever; chills; increased cough; increased breathing problems
 - **thrush (fungal infection) in mouth and/or throat.** You may develop a yeast infection (*Candida albicans*) in your mouth or throat. Rinse your mouth with water without swallowing after use to help prevent thrush in your mouth and throat.
 - **serious allergic reactions.** Call your healthcare provider or get emergency medical care if you get any of the following symptoms of a serious allergic reaction: rash; hives; swelling of the face, mouth, and tongue; breathing problems

BREO[®] ELLIPTA[®]
(fluticasone furoate 100 mcg and vilanterol 25 mcg inhalation powder)



(serious side effects, cont'd)

- **sudden breathing problems immediately after inhaling your medicine**
- **effects on heart:** increased blood pressure; a fast and/or irregular heartbeat; chest pain
- **effects on nervous system:** tremor; nervousness
- **reduced adrenal function.** This can happen when you stop taking an oral corticosteroid (such as prednisone) and start taking a medicine containing an inhaled corticosteroid (such as BREO). Symptoms include: feeling tired; lack of energy; weakness; nausea and vomiting; low blood pressure.
- **changes in laboratory blood values (sugar, potassium)**
- **weakened immune system and increased chance of getting infections (immunosuppression).** You should avoid exposure to chickenpox and measles, and, if exposed, consult your healthcare provider without delay. Worsening of existing tuberculosis, fungal, bacterial, viral, or parasitic infections, or herpes infection of the eye (ocular herpes simplex) may occur.
- **bone thinning or weakness (osteoporosis)**
- **eye problems including glaucoma and cataracts.** You should have regular eye exams while using BREO.
- **Common side effects of BREO include:**
 - runny nose and sore throat
 - upper respiratory tract infection
 - headache
 - thrush in mouth and/or throat. Rinse your mouth without swallowing after use to help prevent this

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch, or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

*Restrictions apply. See myBREO.com for eligibility rules.

Please see Brief Summary of Prescribing Information for BREO ELLIPTA on adjacent pages.



BREO ELLIPTA was developed in collaboration with **Theravance**



GSK for you

If you don't have prescription coverage and can't afford your medicines, visit GSKforyou.com or call **1-866-GSK-FOR-U** (1-866-475-3678)

BREO® ELLIPTA®
(fluticasone furoate 100 mcg and
vilanterol 25 mcg inhalation powder) **BRIEF SUMMARY**

Read the Medication Guide that comes with BREO ELLIPTA (*BREE-oh-ee-LIP-ta*) before you start using it and each time you get a refill. There may be new information. This summary does not take the place of talking to your healthcare provider about your medical condition or treatment.

What is the most important information I should know about BREO ELLIPTA?

BREO ELLIPTA is only approved for use in chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). BREO ELLIPTA is NOT approved for use in asthma.

BREO ELLIPTA can cause serious side effects, including:

- **People with asthma who take long-acting beta₂-adrenergic agonist (LABA) medicines, such as vilanterol (one of the medicines in BREO ELLIPTA), have an increased risk of death from asthma problems.** It is not known whether fluticasone furoate, the other medicine in BREO ELLIPTA, reduces the risk of death from asthma problems seen with LABA medicines.
- **It is not known if LABA medicines, such as vilanterol (one of the medicines in BREO ELLIPTA), increase the risk of death in people with COPD.**
- **Call your healthcare provider if breathing problems worsen over time while using BREO ELLIPTA.** You may need different treatment.
- **Get emergency medical care if:**
 - your breathing problems worsen quickly
 - you use your rescue inhaler, but it does not relieve your breathing problems.

What is BREO ELLIPTA?

BREO ELLIPTA combines an inhaled corticosteroid (ICS) medicine, fluticasone furoate, and a LABA medicine, vilanterol.

- ICS medicines, such as fluticasone furoate (one of the medicines in BREO ELLIPTA), help to decrease inflammation in the lungs. Inflammation in the lungs can lead to breathing problems.
- LABA medicines, such as vilanterol (one of the medicines in BREO ELLIPTA), help the muscles around the airways in your lungs stay relaxed to prevent symptoms such as wheezing, cough, chest tightness, and shortness of breath. These symptoms can happen when the muscles around the airways tighten. This makes it hard to breathe.

BREO ELLIPTA is used for COPD. COPD is a chronic lung disease that includes chronic bronchitis, emphysema, or both. BREO ELLIPTA is a prescription medicine that is used long term as 1 inhalation 1 time each day to improve symptoms of COPD for better breathing and to reduce the number of flare-ups (the worsening of your COPD symptoms for several days).

- **BREO ELLIPTA is not for use to treat sudden symptoms of COPD.** Always have a rescue inhaler (an inhaled, short-acting bronchodilator) with you to treat sudden symptoms. If you do not have a rescue inhaler, contact your healthcare provider to have one prescribed for you.
- **BREO ELLIPTA is not for the treatment of asthma. It is not known if BREO ELLIPTA is safe and effective in people with asthma.**
- BREO ELLIPTA should not be used in children. It is not known if BREO ELLIPTA is safe and effective in children.

Who should not use BREO ELLIPTA?

Do not use BREO ELLIPTA if you:

- have a severe allergy to milk proteins. Ask your healthcare provider if you are not sure.
- are allergic to fluticasone furoate, vilanterol, or any of the ingredients in BREO ELLIPTA. See "What are the ingredients in BREO ELLIPTA?" below for a complete list of ingredients.

What should I tell my healthcare provider before using BREO ELLIPTA?

Tell your healthcare provider about all of your health conditions, including if you:

- have heart problems
- have high blood pressure
- have seizures
- have thyroid problems
- have diabetes
- have liver problems
- have weak bones (osteoporosis)
- have an immune system problem
- have eye problems such as glaucoma or cataracts
- are allergic to any of the ingredients in BREO ELLIPTA, any other medicines, or food products. See "What are the ingredients in BREO ELLIPTA?" below for a complete list of ingredients.
- have any type of viral, bacterial, or fungal infection
- are exposed to chickenpox or measles or have been around anyone who has chickenpox or measles
- have any other medical conditions
- are pregnant or planning to become pregnant. It is not known if BREO ELLIPTA may harm your unborn baby.
- are breastfeeding. It is not known if the medicines in BREO ELLIPTA pass into your milk and if they can harm your baby.

Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take, including prescription and non-prescription medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. BREO ELLIPTA and certain other medicines may interact with each other. This may cause serious side effects. Especially, tell your healthcare provider if you take antifungal or anti-HIV medicines.

Know the medicines you take. Keep a list of them to show your healthcare provider and pharmacist when you get a new medicine.

How should I use BREO ELLIPTA?

Read the step-by-step instructions for using BREO ELLIPTA in the Medication Guide.

- **Do not** use BREO ELLIPTA unless your healthcare provider has taught you how to use the inhaler and you understand how to use it correctly.
- Use BREO ELLIPTA exactly as prescribed. **Do not** use BREO ELLIPTA more often than prescribed.
- Use 1 inhalation of BREO ELLIPTA 1 time each day. Use BREO ELLIPTA at the same time each day.
- If you miss a dose of BREO ELLIPTA, take it as soon as you remember. Do not take more than 1 inhalation per day. Take your next dose at your usual time. Do not take 2 doses at one time.
- If you take too much BREO ELLIPTA, call your healthcare provider and get medical help right away if you have any unusual symptoms, such as worsening shortness of breath, chest pain, increased heart rate, or shakiness.
- **Do not use other medicines that contain a LABA for any reason.** Ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist if any of your other medicines are LABA medicines.
- Do not stop using BREO ELLIPTA unless told to do so by your healthcare provider because your symptoms might get worse. Your healthcare provider will change your medicines as needed.
- **BREO ELLIPTA does not relieve sudden symptoms.** Always have a rescue inhaler with you to treat sudden symptoms. If you do not have a rescue inhaler, call your healthcare provider to have one prescribed for you.
- Call your healthcare provider or get medical care right away if:
 - your breathing problems get worse
 - you need to use your rescue inhaler more often than usual
 - your rescue inhaler does not work as well to relieve your symptoms
 - you need to use 4 or more inhalations of your rescue inhaler in 24 hours for 2 or more days in a row
 - you use 1 whole canister of your rescue inhaler in 8 weeks

What are the possible side effects with BREO ELLIPTA?

BREO ELLIPTA can cause serious side effects, including:

- **See "What is the most important information I should know about BREO ELLIPTA?"**
- **pneumonia.** People with COPD have a higher chance of getting pneumonia. BREO ELLIPTA may increase the chance of getting pneumonia. Call your healthcare provider if you notice any of the following symptoms:
 - increase in mucus (sputum) production
 - change in mucus color
 - fever
 - chills
 - increased cough
 - increased breathing problems

(Continued on the next page)

BREO® ELLIPTA®
(fluticasone furoate 100 mcg and
vilanterol 25 mcg inhalation powder)
(serious side effects, cont'd)

BRIEF SUMMARY (cont'd)

- **thrush (fungal infection) in mouth and throat.** You may develop a yeast infection (*Candida albicans*) in your mouth or throat. Rinse your mouth with water without swallowing after using BREO ELLIPTA to help prevent thrush in your mouth and throat.
- **serious allergic reactions.** Call your healthcare provider or get emergency medical care if you get any of the following symptoms of a serious allergic reaction:
 - rash
 - swelling of the face, mouth, and tongue
 - hives
 - breathing problems
- **sudden breathing problems immediately after inhaling your medicine**
- **effects on heart**
 - increased blood pressure
 - a fast and/or irregular heartbeat
 - chest pain
- **effects on nervous system**
 - tremor
 - nervousness
- **reduced adrenal function (adrenal insufficiency).** Adrenal insufficiency is a condition in which the adrenal glands do not make enough steroid hormones. This can happen when you stop taking oral corticosteroid medicines (such as prednisone) and start taking a medicine containing an inhaled corticosteroid (such as BREO ELLIPTA). When your body is under stress from fever, trauma (such as a car accident), infection, surgery, or worse COPD symptoms, adrenal insufficiency can get worse and may cause death. Symptoms of adrenal insufficiency include:
 - feeling tired (fatigue)
 - nausea and vomiting
 - lack of energy
 - low blood pressure
 - weakness
- **changes in laboratory blood values (sugar, potassium)**
- **weakened immune system and increased chance of getting infections (immunosuppression)**
- **bone thinning or weakness (osteoporosis)**
- **eye problems including glaucoma and cataracts.** You should have regular eye exams while using BREO ELLIPTA.

Common side effects of BREO ELLIPTA include:

- runny nose and sore throat
- upper respiratory tract infection
- headache
- thrush in the mouth and/or throat. Rinse your mouth without swallowing after use to help prevent this.

Tell your healthcare provider about any side effect that bothers you or that does not go away.

These are not all the side effects with BREO ELLIPTA. Ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist for more information.

Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

What are the ingredients in BREO ELLIPTA?

Active ingredients: fluticasone furoate, vilanterol

Inactive ingredients: lactose monohydrate (contains milk proteins), magnesium stearate

Ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist for additional information about BREO ELLIPTA. You can also contact the company that makes BREO ELLIPTA (toll free) at 1-888-825-5249 or at www.myBREO.com.

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May 2013

BRE:1MG

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FIRE continued from page 20

Meanwhile, the military has continued to also provide boots on the ground in the worst fire years. That includes six Army and two Marine battalions that went to the front lines of the 1988 Yellowstone fires, and seven military battalions that fought Western wildfires in 1994. A battalion from Fort Lewis, Wash., fought fires as recently as 2006.

The Navy and Marine Corps regularly send helicopters and crews to drop water on wildfires in eastern San Diego County, according to Air Force Col. Michael Harper of the U.S. Northern Command Future Operations Division. State governors have simultaneously summoned the National Guard to fight wildfires on the ground and from the air.

“When we have a large number of fires in the country, we run out of resources pretty quickly,” says Dan Smith of the National Association of State Foresters, who works with the National Interagency Fire Center. “The Guard provides a lot of very valuable assets: helicopters for bucket work, crew transport, and in some cases medevac.”

The Guard also helps with road closures and in some states supplies trained wildland firefighters on the ground.

MAFFS-equipped C-130s, meanwhile, have fought fires all over the western United States as well as in northern Mexico, Europe and Africa, Harper says. Their 1997 firefighting sorties in Indonesia made the pages of *National Geographic*.

FIREFIGHTING DREAMS

Thompson first dreamed of piloting an aerial tanker as a kid watching the planes fight fires in Northern California. He even



A MAFFS-equipped C-130 from the Air Force Reserve Command's 302nd Airlift Wing soars above the smoke of the Springs fire near Banks, Idaho, just north of Eagle, on Aug. 8, 2012. Assigned to the AFRC's Colorado wing, MAFFS 5 made more than 500 retardant drops for that year's firefighting missions in support of the National Interagency Fire Center. U.S. Air Force photo by Master Sgt. Dave Buttner

spent a season as a ground firefighter for what was then the California Department of Forestry. “Of course, I never thought I’d really get to do it,” he says. Thompson spent nearly eight years flying C-130s for the Air Force before joining the reserve in the mid-1990s, just as the 302nd was becoming a MAFFS wing. The first fire he flew was near his boyhood home in California. “It was pretty cool to go back in one of those planes I watched as a kid,” he says.

Likewise, Lt. Col Alan Brown found himself flying the Squirrel Creek fire in Wyoming’s Snowy Range in 2013, country he had explored while in college in nearby Laramie. “I grew up hunting and fishing and backpacking right close,” says Brown, part of the Wyoming Air National Guard. “You’re helping save stuff that’s right in your own backyard.”

Today, National Guard wings based in Wyoming, California and North Carolina – along with Colorado’s Air Force Reserve Wing – can be summoned to fight wildfires. Each of the four wings retrofits two C-130s for the firefighting mission and keeps 10 crews trained and ready. That training includes an intense weeklong refresher course each spring put on in conjunction with the U.S. Forest Service and other federal land managers.

Only highly seasoned Guard and reserve pilots and crews fly fires. Most served on active duty before transitioning to their current roles. At the 302nd, for example, the average air tanker crewmember has logged 3,500 flying hours.

The specially equipped C-130s are deployed only

when the commercial air tankers contracted by the U.S. Forest Service and other land-management agencies can’t keep up with demand.

“The military is not allowed to compete with civilian operators,” Harper says.

The call for an air tanker starts with the incident commander on the ground and works its way up to the National Interagency Fire Center. The request for the C-130 tankers then goes to the Department of Defense through a military liaison.

The wings work out a call-up order before fire season starts, based on their other commitments. This may mean that the North Carolina wing is dispatched to an Idaho fire first because the bulk of Wyoming’s Air National Guard planes and crews are flying combat support missions overseas. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan made that juggling act difficult, but “we never let the Forest Service down,” Champlin says.

Once a wing is ordered to fly, the Guard and reserve have 48 to 72 hours to prepare crew and aircraft to fly a firefighting, rather than a military, mission.

“That’s the hard part to get across to the public,” Thompson says. “They know there’s C-130s at Peterson. Why can’t they just take off and go? There’s quite a bit of assembly required.”

Beyond mandatory crew rest and lining up tanker bases and lead planes, that assembly includes sliding an MAFFS unit into the back of each C-130 and wiring up the cockpit controls. In addition to a 3,000-gallon retardant tank, the unit has air

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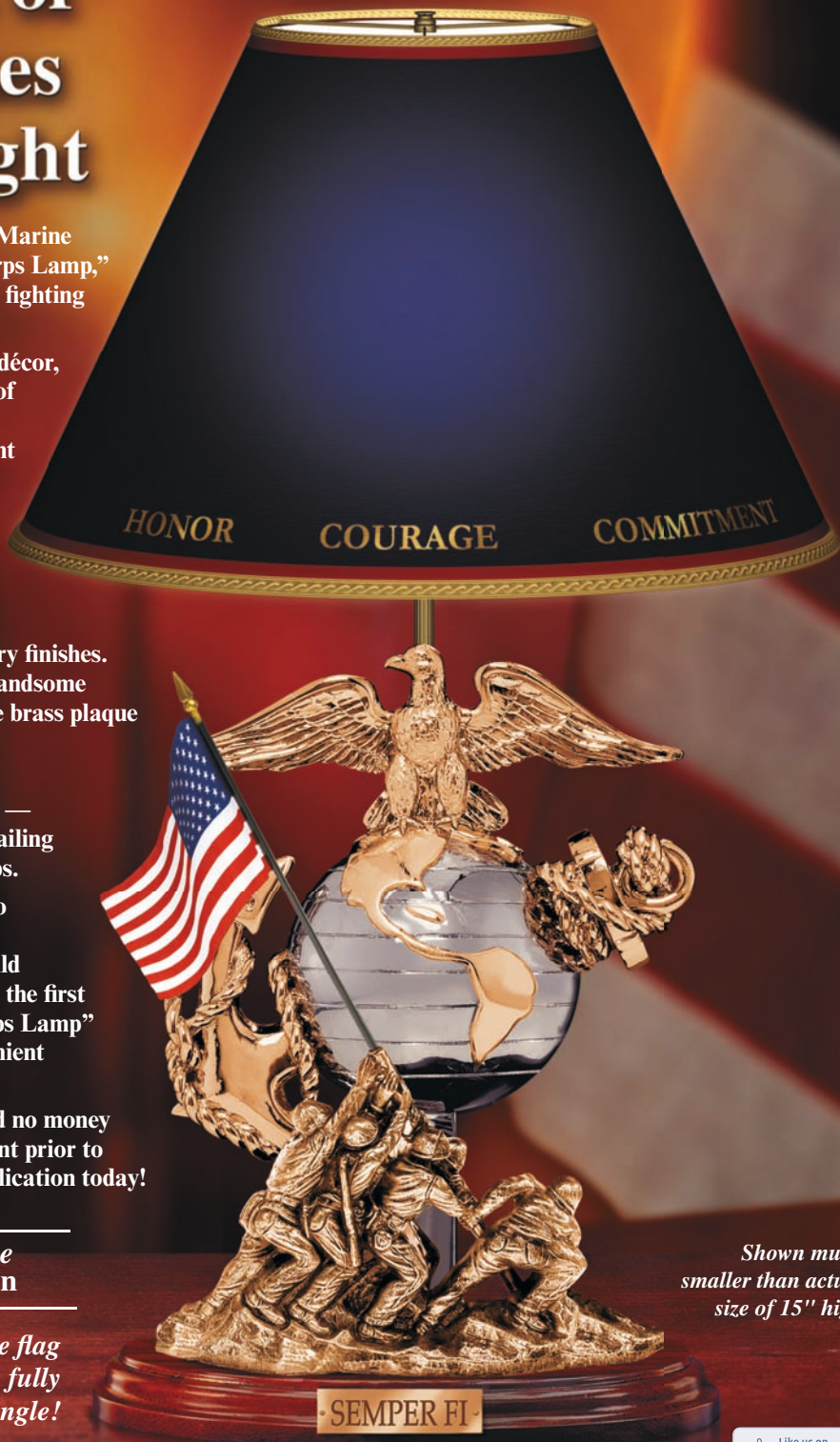
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A PROUD LEGACY

The U.S. military has been helping fight wildfires with ground troops since the late 1800s. Aerial tankers flown by Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve crews joined the fight in the 1970s. A few of the highlights:

1886 Troop M of the 1st U.S. Cavalry takes command of Yellowstone National Park. Within days, the soldiers are fighting wildfires.

1890 U.S. Secretary of the Interior John Noble asks for troops to patrol and fight fires in three newly established national parks: Yosemite, Sequoia and General Grant.

1905 The U.S. Forest Service is created.

1910 Four thousand soldiers are sent to help fight an outbreak of more than 1,700 wildfires in Idaho, Montana and Washington that ultimately covers more than 3 million acres.

WORLD WAR I Military biplanes are used for fire patrol over national forests.

1947 The U.S. Forest Service publishes the results of Air Force/Forest Service experiments dropping fire retardant on wildfires with a surplus bomber.

1956 Helicopters become a firefighting tool.

1971 The first retardant drop from an aircraft equipped with a prototype of the Modular Aerial Fire Fighting System (MAFFS) is conducted on the Romero fire in California.

1973 The first retardant drop from an airplane equipped with a production model of the MAFFS system occurs on the Lolo fire in Montana.

1988 Six Army and two Marine battalions fight the Yellowstone fires. Military helicopters and MAFFS-equipped C-130s are also deployed.

1989 Four Army battalions fight fires in Idaho and Oregon. Helicopters from Fort Campbell and MAFFS-equipped C-130s are also deployed.

1990 Four Army battalions are sent to fire lines in Oregon and California.

1994 Seven military battalions are activated to fight fires in the West.

1996 An Army battalion and a Marine Corps battalion fight fires.

2001 Two Army battalions help fight fires on the Virginia Lake Complex in Washington.

2002 An Army battalion is deployed to fight fires in Oregon.

2003 An Army battalion is sent to fight fires in western Montana.

2006 An Army battalion is deployed to fight the Tripod Complex fire in Washington.

2012 MAFFS-equipped C-130s flown by the Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve fly 922 sorties and drop 2.4 million gallons of retardant.

Sources: National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, Department of Defense

compressors that send a pressurized stream of retardant out a nozzle in the side of the airplane. “It’s like using a hose, where we can adjust the coverage level and spread it out over varying distances,” Champlin says.

The retardant isn’t dropped on the flames. Instead, pilots try to place a line of retardant in the path of the fire, slowing it down so ground crews can put it out. The C-130s load retardant at one of about 30 U.S. Forest Service tanker bases, as well as Air Force bases when the need arises.

Fighting fires comes with far more uncertainty than military-planned C-130 missions. “You just kind of show up, and a forward air controller (lead airplane) talks you into a dynamic target and environment,” Thompson says. The aerial tankers contend with smoke, flames, wind and the ever-changing situation on the ground, not to mention the need to fly low and slow so the retardant drop is most effective. That means keeping the C-130 at about 150 feet above the ground in high-elevation mountainous terrain on hot summer days, pushing the airplanes to their limits.

“You’re taking roughly 75 tons of airplane as low as it can safely go and throwing 3,000 gallons of goop out of it, trying to hit targets in a few yards of accuracy,” Thompson says. “If they come back and say you saved this or that, there’s nothing better. It’s just as bad when they say, ‘Sorry, you missed. We lost it.’”

‘THEY’RE THERE FOR US’ MAFFS wings have flown more than 11,000 hours fighting fires since the early 1970s and dropped an average of almost a million gallons of retardant a year in the past decade alone. Their ability to work as a team, deal with hazardous situations and manage risk “make them invaluable,” Segar says.

Advances in military technology are also becoming important. A drone operated by the California Air National Guard’s 163rd Reconnaissance Wing made its first appearance on the fire line last year. Able to stay aloft for 24 hours, the drone provided real-time infrared video that helped crews track and fight the Rim fire in California. This year, military experts were embedded with wildfire management teams to see if they could help the federal land management agencies improve the use of aerial tankers.

Meanwhile, severe drought conditions – particularly in California and parts of the West – may mean an even greater need for the military’s help fighting fires next summer.

“Predicting fire seasons is really tricky,” Segar says. “It’s still too early to tell. But it’s good to know that they’re there for us.” 🌿

Ken Olsen is a frequent contributor to The American Legion Magazine.

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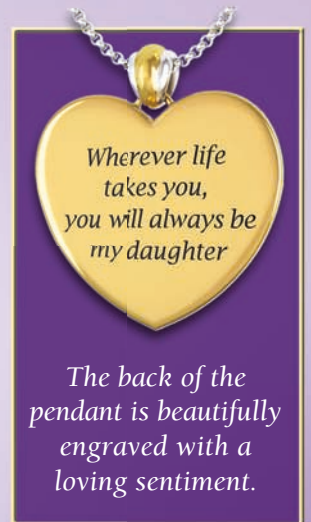
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The Family Man

National Commander Mike Helm takes care of those next to him, at home and in the Legion.

BY MATT GRILLS



Mike Helm grew up playing in the fields of the Nebraska-Kansas border.

And when he says his parents' farm was on the state line, he means *on the line*. "When Dad was driving down the road, we kids would argue about who was in Nebraska and who was in Kansas by where we sat in the car," he recalls.

His childhood home stands empty now, but as Helm walks the ground, the memories are vivid. This is where he once milked cows, played ball in the pasture, rode neighbors' horses and sledged off the barn roof into snowdrifts.

This stretch of country is also where Helm learned to appreciate what it means to belong to a community. On Saturday nights, families gathered to visit and watch a movie shown on the side of a building. One farmer's work was his neighbor's, too; the men would help each other dehorn and vaccinate cattle, for instance, while the women made a meal to share.

"It was a good way to live," Helm says.

As Nebraska's family farms disappear, local American Legion posts – never all that big – see the towns around them shrinking. They're often the heart of what's left. But when there's something to celebrate – such as Helm's campaign to become the state's first national commander since 1967 – a community still comes together. In June, Legionnaires, Auxiliary and Legion Riders drove from hours away to pack an event at Jack Helt Post 313 in Lebanon, Helm's post home.

"People were there who aren't even part of the Legion family, but they're friends and backers of Mike," says Ray Haag, a past post commander who has known Helm since he was a boy. "You can't imagine how proud we are of him. He's one of us."

'Those were last year's dues' Elected to the Legion's highest office at the 96th National Convention in Charlotte, N.C., in August, Helm became a leader early on. At the local and state level, he has served as post, county and district commander, and was Nebraska's first Vietnam-era veteran to be department commander. Helm is also a past national vice commander, and served as chairman of the National Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation and Foreign Relations commissions.

His 43 years of membership began at a farm sale, where Harold Blakely, then Post 313's adjutant, asked Helm if he planned to join The American Legion now that he was out of the Army. "Of course," he answered. "It's my dad's Legion." He paid \$5, and Blakely said, "Next month we'll have a meeting. You come to it."

At the meeting, Helm was voted adjutant.

"He can't be adjutant," Blakely piped up. "He's not a member." Confused, Helm said, "Harold, I paid my dues to you down at Joe Crocker's farm sale. Remember?" Blakely responded, "Yeah, you did, but those were last year's dues."

Helm chuckles when he tells the story. "I gave him another \$5, and within a month I had two years of continuous membership."

In the beginning, he saw the Legion as more recreation than responsibility. Then Wayne Davis – another friend and Helm's mentor – pulled him aside and encouraged him to think bigger. "What you're doing is fine," he said. "You like what's going on. You're a good member. But you have the capacity to do more, and if you're going to, you'll have to leave some of this behind."

At that point, Helm says, he got serious about doing the Legion's work.

"As you get involved in our programs, you become more concerned about different issues," he says. "All of a sudden you're talking about national security and VA benefits. You already have those concerns personally, and the Legion helps you have a say about them."

Helm also sees the Legion as an opportunity for veterans to fulfill promises they made to each other in uniform.

"Didn't you ever tell your buddy, 'Don't worry, I'll take care of you?'" he says. "Even after you're out, it may not be that particular person you're helping, but it's another veteran."

Planes and postal routes Helm's father, John, was an Army mechanic in France during World War II. His three older brothers served in Vietnam. When Helm received his draft notice, though, troops were coming home, not going. He went through basic and advanced infantry training at Fort Lewis, Wash., then to Fort Bragg, N.C., for jump school. He served with the 82nd Airborne and earned his Ranger tab in 1972.

"I enjoyed the military," Helm says. "I liked getting up early in the morning, doing push-ups, jumping out of airplanes – all that stuff."

He stayed in for three years before returning home to help his parents run the farm. In his free time, he and a buddy traveled all over Nebraska going to American Legion meetings, "whether we had any business there or not. We just thought it was fun." That same friend was helping him harvest milo one day when they came in for lunch and found a newspaper on the table, with a listing for a post office test circled.



Photo by Lucas Carter

TOP TEN THINGS YOU DON'T KNOW ABOUT MIKE HELM

- 10** He's a big fan of the classic TV series "Murder, She Wrote" and "Columbo."
- 9** He proposed to his wife, Debbie, at the Nebraska Legion's Mid-Winter Conference in Grand Island.
- 8** You won't find him on a golf course. He doesn't play.
- 7** He attended three years of seminary in Pittsburgh, intending to become a priest.
- 6** He's a morning person and wishes the rest of the world was, too. "People who don't want to get up need to go to bed earlier."
- 5** At Christmastime, the people on his mail route often left him candy or baked goods in their mailboxes. After devouring some peanut brittle he thought was for him, he opened an attached card and realized he'd eaten his parents' gift to their neighbors.
- 4** They didn't know each other at the time, but in his Army Ranger class photo, Helm is standing near another future American Legion national commander, John Brieden (2003-2004).
- 3** After smoking for 20 years, he quit cold turkey. On Dec. 31, 1987, he threw his cigarettes on the dashboard of his car and hasn't smoked since.
- 2** One of his cousins is Air Force Lt. Danny Thomas, a POW/MIA whose plane disappeared 15 miles inside Laos in 1971.
- 1** He has no regrets. "Everything that's happened to me is more than I expected."



The commander at home

See a video of National Commander Mike Helm in his native Nebraska and learn about his life in the Legion. www.legion.org/legiontv

"Well, look here, Mikey," his friend joked. "I think your mom's trying to give you a hint!"

Someone else landed that clerk job, but the postmaster asked Helm if he'd be the emergency sub for the rural mail carrier. Eventually he was offered the full-time position, delivering mail out of Norcatur, Kan., where he lives. When he retired in 2013 after 33 years, he had 220 customers on his route and was driving 120 miles a day.

Helm's wife, Debbie, was working in the nearby village of Danbury when they first met in the mid-'80s.

"Us old bachelor boys, we checked out the new schoolteachers," he says. "I took her out a few times, and at Christmas I brought her a rose. And she said, 'I'd better tell you, I don't think I'll be here too long. I'll probably be going back to North Dakota.' Strike one. Then she said, 'I'm not going to marry a farmer.' I was a farmer. Strike two. 'And I'm not really interested in marrying anybody from Kansas.' Strike three. I said, 'OK, see you later.'"

But you can't thwart destiny. A few years later, Helm went to see his niece's school program, and he and Debbie reconnected. She smiles when she remembers how he won her over. "I went to Kearney with a friend of mine for an education workshop, and we were stuck there because of a blizzard," she says. "Mike found out where I was staying and called both nights to ask how I was doing. My friend's husband didn't call her at all. She was kind of impressed by that."

They married the next April, and have four sons and a daughter.

"I sometimes tell her, 'You know, if you had paid attention to me when I first brought you that rose, we'd be through with kids by now,'" he says, laughing.

Helm didn't push his children toward the military, but three of the five have continued the family's tradition of service: Aaron and his wife, Robie, are graduates of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, N.Y., and are currently serving with the 1-44 Air Defense Artillery Battalion in Kuwait; Jacob is a senior at the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colo.; and Matthew is a sophomore at Kansas State University (KSU) enrolled in Army ROTC. Rebecca and her husband, Jaron, are KSU graduates and live in San Antonio. The Helms' youngest, Timothy, is a senior at Decatur Community High School in Oberlin, Kan.

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Mike and Debbie Helm have been married for 26 years and have five children, including, from left, Matthew, Timothy and Jacob. The oldest, Aaron, is deployed to Kuwait, and their daughter, Rebecca, lives in Manhattan, Kan. Photo by Lucas Carter

All the way to the top Walking through the Indianola, Neb., cemetery, Helm points out his relatives' graves. His grandfather, Clarence Sughrue, was a soldier in World War I. His uncle, Stanley Sughrue, was a sailor during the Korean War. Another uncle, Kenneth Sughrue, served with the 504th Bomb Group in World War II. He doesn't have to say a word; he's clearly proud of his heritage.

Helm's father was laid to rest here in 2004. They spent a lot of time farming together, long after Helm's seven brothers and sisters had left home, and were close. "I look back at when we'd have an argument or get mad and throw hay bales back and forth at each other, and I even enjoyed those times because they were times I had with my dad," he says. "Good or bad, they were still good."

Helm's mother, Helen, is 92 and living at a nursing home in Oberlin. When he was a mail carrier, he'd drop by every day after his route to check on her. You'll still see him there on Tuesdays, helping with bingo. On the wall of her room, surrounded by photos of her children and grandchildren, is a brochure announcing Helm's candidacy for national commander.

"We're glad she's here to see it," says Helm's oldest brother, Jim, who served with the 5th Special Forces in Vietnam. "Over the years, I've seen how Mike became enamored of the Legion. It's worthwhile. You feel you're accomplishing

something. The family's happy that he's made it all the way to the top."

Now that Helm's there, what would he like to accomplish? In short, with the 100th anniversary on the horizon, he wants to grow the American Legion Family in a big way, with each organization – the Legion, the Auxiliary, the Sons – trying to boost membership across the board.

"Together, we've got well over 3 million now," Helm says. "By this time next year, I'd like to be looking at 4 million members." To get there, teamwork will be key, he says. For example, if a post and a squadron reach 100 percent but the Auxiliary unit is three members away from its goal, "let's help them get their three members. By doing that, we're going to lift each other up."

And instead of promoting a specific American Legion program, Helm has set a goal of raising a combined \$4 million for the organization's charities. Donors can give to Operation Comfort Warriors, the National Emergency Fund, Temporary Financial Assistance, the Legacy Scholarship Fund, the Child Welfare Foundation or another cause and have it counted toward the grand total.

"By focusing the entire American Legion family on one goal, we end up with 4 million members, 4 million dollars," he says. "I think we can do it." 🌿

Matt Grills is managing editor of The American Legion Magazine.

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The Chicago Children's Choir performs "The Star-Spangled Banner" in Chicago on Flag Day. Macy's invited Chicagoans to join in the singing as part of the Smithsonian Institute's "Raise It Up" campaign celebrating the national anthem's bicentennial. John Konstantaras/AP

‘LONG MAY IT WAVE’

The American Legion has long championed “The Star-Spangled Banner,” which outlasted other contenders to become our national anthem.

BY MARC FERRIS

One of the curious facts about “The Star-Spangled Banner” is that 117 years passed between the moment Francis Scott Key put pen to paper in 1814 and Congress’ designation of the song as our official national anthem in 1931. Despite several rivals for patriotic affection that emerged throughout that time, organizations such as The American Legion lobbied on the song’s behalf in the 1920s and fought against its desecration after the law took effect.

Born in battle, “The Star-Spangled Banner” is distinct for having been written behind enemy lines. While negotiating the release of a prisoner from the British during the War of 1812, Key became privy to England’s plans to rout Baltimore. Enemy commanders held him and two compatriots aboard a ship until the battle’s end, when, inspired by the massive banner’s hoisting over Fort McHenry, he wrote his famous words.

Through the years, many opponents of the song have decried its alleged militarism, but Key merely

described what he saw that night. In fact, Key, a pacifist, served as a reluctant fighter when the British marched on Washington three weeks before the Battle of Baltimore.

His song also qualifies the country’s use of force. Many Americans are unaware that Key completed four verses, which he matched with a pre-existing melody. In the final verse, he wrote, “then conquer we must, when our cause it is just, and this be our motto ‘In God is Our Trust!’” The federal government has printed the parsed phrase “In God We Trust” on coins since the Civil War and on paper money since the 1950s, when Congress adopted the slogan as the nation’s official motto.

“The Star-Spangled Banner,” which became instantly popular, outlasted a handful of other anthem contenders throughout the 1800s. In 1893, the Navy ordered that it be played for colors, and the Army followed suit two years later. President Woodrow Wilson issued an executive order in 1916

declaring Keys' song to be the national anthem, though he considered his edict applicable only to the armed forces.

Soon after The American Legion's founding in 1919, the organization attempted to instill proper etiquette toward the Stars and Stripes and also promoted "The Star-Spangled Banner" as the national anthem. By helping pass the Flag Code of 1923 along with dozens of other patriotic groups, the Legion sought to institute the ritual of standing and removing headgear when the song aired, a practice adopted informally and inconsistently in the 1800s. Under the leadership of Garland Powell, head of the National Americanism Commission, the Legion promoted Patriotism Day in the nation's schools throughout the 1920s to foster respect for the flag and its primary ode.

The Legion worked closely with Veterans of Foreign Wars and other patriotic groups to lobby Congress on behalf of "The Star-Spangled Banner," prevailing on allies to introduce anthem legislation. Politicians remained reluctant to act on a nonpressing issue, but it should come as little surprise that two scandals embroiling veterans helped force the hand of Congress and President Herbert Hoover, who ultimately signed the bill. The law cost almost nothing to implement and mollified veterans incensed over the bonus issue and shoddy treatment of veterans by federal agencies.

Official designation for the song did little to end controversies, especially after singer Kate Smith brought "God Bless America" to prominence in 1938. Lucy Monroe, known as the Star-Spangled Soprano, served as a counterweight to Smith and first rose to prominence as the nation's most famous anthem singer after she debuted at the Legion's 1937 national convention in New York. Monroe regularly performed for the nation's troops and at Yankee Stadium, singing the song thousands of times.

In the late 1930s, some Americans displayed

indifference toward "The Star-Spangled Banner," and in 1939 Legionnaires picketed a movie theater in Santa Barbara, Calif., objecting to what they considered "an informal rendering of the anthem in 'canned' form" along with a lack of respect shown by audience members. One sign read, "This theater is commercializing patriotism by deliberately misusing the National Anthem."

During World War II, the Legion sponsored a revamped Flag Code, passed by Congress on July 4, 1942, which called for Americans to stand for the anthem and hold their right hands over their hearts. During a Legion rally at Soldier Field in Chicago, 75,000 people sang the song as one.

The Legion took the lead in commemorating Memorial Day and Veterans Day and hosted numerous ceremonies welcoming new immigrants to the country, all of which featured flag-raising and performances of the anthem.

In 1951, for example, National Commander Erle Cocke Jr. presided over "I Am An American Day" at the Hollywood Bowl. The Los Angeles Police Band played the anthem prior to the flag being raised, and movie stars Roy Rogers, Lana Turner and George Burns entertained a crowd that included 2,500 new U.S. citizens. That same year, American Legion Post 1789 in New York conducted a similar Americanization ceremony, and in Chicago the American Legion Auxiliary organized an A.B.C. (Americans By Choice) rally, passing out cards with the Pledge of Allegiance on one side and the anthem's lyrics on the other.

When Congress conducted hearings in 1958 to consider a bill to institute an official version of "The Star-Spangled Banner" – there is no authorized rendition – the Legion supported the initiative, although many hereditary groups, including the Daughters of the American Revolution, opposed the measure, contending incorrectly that the bill's sponsor, Joel T. Broyhill, R-Va., sought to change

THE FLAG THAT INSPIRED THE ANTHEM

The original "Star-Spangled Banner" is the centerpiece of a permanent exhibit at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History in Washington. As part of the national anthem's 200th anniversary and its own 50th anniversary, the museum has sponsored coast-to-coast sing-alongs, a Flag Day concert and a special display of Francis Scott Key's original manuscript, on loan from the Maryland Historical Society.

Visit the National Museum of American History's interactive site devoted to the flag, its legacy and preservation efforts.

 amhistory.si.edu/starspangledbanner

Courtesy National Museum of American History



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THE STAR-SPANGLED BANNER

Francis Scott Key

O say can you see, by the dawn's early light,
What so proudly we hail'd at the twilight's last gleaming,
Whose broad stripes and bright stars through the perilous fight,
O'er the ramparts we watch'd were so gallantly streaming?
And the rocket's red glare, the bombs bursting in air,
Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there,
O say does that star-spangled banner yet wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?

On the shore dimly seen through the mists of the deep
Where the foe's haughty host in dread silence reposes,
What is that which the breeze, o'er the towering steep,
As it fitfully blows, half conceals, half discloses?
Now it catches the gleam of the morning's first beam,
In full glory reflected now shines in the stream,
'Tis the star-spangled banner – O long may it wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave!

And where is that band who so vauntingly swore
That the havoc of war and the battle's confusion,
A home and a Country should leave us no more?
Their blood has wash'd out their foul footsteps' pollution.
No refuge could save the hireling and slave
From the terror of flight, or the gloom of the grave:
And the star-spangled banner in triumph doth wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.

O thus be it ever, when freemen shall stand
Between their lov'd home and the war's desolation!
Blest with vict'ry and peace may the heav'n rescued land
Praise the power that hath made and preserved us a nation!
Then conquer we must, when our cause it is just,
And this be our motto – "In God is our trust,"
And the star-spangled banner in triumph shall wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.



"The Star-Spangled Banner" became one of the nation's most popular patriotic songs during the Civil War, which rekindled Americans' love for their flag and the ideals it represents. Photo courtesy Duke University

the song. The committee never acted and the matter died.

In the 1960s, performers began to do individualistic versions of the song – José Feliciano at the 1968 World Series, for example, and Jimi Hendrix at Woodstock in 1969. The Legion vigorously opposed unorthodox renditions and has passed several resolutions to this effect, including one in 1994 supporting "traditional" arrangements of the song and another in 2006 opposing changes to it.

The American Legion continues to promote respect for "The Star-Spangled Banner" and the flag it represents. In 2012, the Legion passed a resolution supporting the establishment of Star-Spangled Banner Day on March 3, the anniversary of the day Hoover signed the anthem bill into law. The measure would help spread knowledge of the anthem, which is "still there" 200 years after its creation and will be for a long time. 🌿

Marc Ferris is the author of "Star-Spangled Banner: The Unlikely Story of America's National Anthem" (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014).

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WHY MIDTERMS MATTER

Often dismissed as unimportant, these elections help keep presidents in check and give the opposition party a chance to rebuild.

BY ANDREW E. BUSCH

In many ways, midterm elections are the poor stepchildren of U.S. politics. With no presidential contest on the ticket, citizens and scholars usually assume they are less important, and voter turnout falls from around 60 percent in presidential election years to around 40 percent in midterm years.

But these elections cannot be so easily dismissed. There are just as many congressional seats up for election in midterm years as in presidential years – the entire House and one-third of the Senate. Also, about two-thirds of state governors are elected in midterm years (and another four in odd years) – more than a minor detail in a federal republic that still lodges considerable responsibility in the hands of state governments.

Moreover, midterm elections give the president's opponents a chance to rejuvenate themselves. One of the best-established patterns in U.S. politics is the tendency of the president's party to lose congressional seats, state legislative seats and governorships in midterm elections. Since 1894, for example, the president's party has lost seats in the House in every midterm election but three (1934, 1998 and 2002).

The Senate pattern is not as consistent, largely

because only one-third of the Senate faces election, and much depends on the lineup of states that have contests. Even there, though, the president's party has lost Senate seats in 20 of 29 midterms since 1894. Historically, presidents fare particularly poorly in Senate midterm elections in their second terms. This "six-year itch" is largely the result of relatively weak senators who win election on the president's coattails but lose when running for re-election later without the president on the ticket.

At the least, this pattern means that midterm elections can serve as a tool for Americans to block a president or force him to compromise. Opposition gains can also undercut the president's claim that election provided him with a popular mandate.

The effects of midterm elections are not always negative. They can also give the opposition a chance to positively refresh itself. For example, when the president's opponents do well, they have a better chance to bring into the spotlight new leaders who can bring the opposition party out of the wilderness. Woodrow Wilson in 1910, Franklin Roosevelt in 1930, Richard Nixon in 1946, Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush in 1966, Bill Clinton in 1982 and George

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W. Bush in 1994 were all future presidents who gained national attention by victories in midterm years as part of opposition-party waves. Because so many governorships are decided in midterm years, the opposition party has a leg up on developing new leadership at the state level.

The president's opponents can also test out new themes and issues that, if successful, can be used in the next presidential election. The "Return to Normalcy" that Republicans promised in 1920, the "Crime, Communism and Korea" they attacked in 1952, and the promise to "Get America Moving Again" that Democrats offered in 1960 were based on their successful midterm campaigns in 1918, 1950 and 1958. If the president's opponents make large enough gains in the midterm elections, they can use their leverage in Congress and the states to promote a new agenda, drawing distinctions from the president and perhaps even forcing him into unpopular vetoes. Democrats accomplished this after 1930 and 2006, Republicans after 1966. Sometimes midterm elections can bring a party wave so pronounced that Congress is defined for years by the class of freshmen elected that year, such as the Democrats' classes of 1958 or 1974 (the "Watergate babies").

Altogether, more often than not, midterm elections serve as an important additional check on the president, and they often work as well to help the opposition party rebuild itself, promoting a sort of long-term balance. As a result, important eras of public policy are often defined not by presidential elections – which get all the attention – but by midterm elections. In some ways, the progressive era of Woodrow Wilson actually began in the midterm election of 1910 and ended when Republicans retook Congress in 1918; the New Deal era began in the

Hoover midterm of 1930 and ended harshly when Republicans gained 71 House seats in 1938; the New Frontier/Great Society era was foreshadowed in Eisenhower's election of 1958 and ran out of steam in the midterm elections of 1966; the supply-side Reagan Revolution began in 1978 (the year the anti-tax Proposition 13 passed in California) and was brought to a halt by Democratic midterm successes in 1982 and 1986; and the era of Obama activism was presaged in 2006 and seriously blunted in 2010.

Of course, patterns in the political world, no matter how strong, are not destiny. There is a wide range of losses even when the pattern holds, from more than a hundred seats in 1894 to a mere handful in several elections. When exceptions appear, they too are important – the "dogs that did not bark." Midterm exceptions in 1934 (when Roosevelt's Democrats gained seats in both houses), 1962 (when Kennedy's Democrats lost only four House seats and gained in the Senate), and 1998 (when Clinton's Democrats gained five in the House) reversed the usual consequences, giving added momentum to the New Deal, the Kennedy program and Clinton's fight against impeachment.

Pundits are busy trying to predict the outcome of this year's midterm elections. We will not know the voting results until Election Day, and we may not know the full consequences of those results for years. But if they are anything like the past, the 2014 midterms will alter the course of the United States. It will be up to voters to determine how. 🇺🇸

Andrew E. Busch is Crown Professor of Government and George R. Roberts Fellow at McKenna College in Claremont, Calif.

OUR SACRED DUTY

Legionnaires of Post 13 in Monroe, La., are planning to host their first "Get Out the Veterans Vote" ceremony Oct. 5, to remind local veterans and all Americans to exercise their right to vote in next month's midterm elections.

The event will feature a band and speeches by Department of Louisiana Commander Bill Foley and former State Rep. Kay Kellogg Katz. The post is promoting the event through public service announcements and media releases, and invites all local veterans service organizations to take part.

"Veterans must participate in the political system to have their voices heard," says Huey O'Neal, a member of Post 13. "They served in the military to

defend and protect the Constitution, and now they do so by voting. Voting is the responsibility of everyone who loves our country."

The American Legion encourages posts to get involved in next month's elections by organizing voter registration drives, sponsoring town-hall meetings and forums, and generally promoting voter participation. Legionnaires can do their part by serving as poll workers, registering potential voters and helping them get to the polls on Election Day.

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Air Force video team members conduct an interview at Joint Base Andrews, Md., as part of their DINFOS coursework. U.S. Air Force photo



Strength through truth

For 50 years, the Defense Information School has turned out highly trained journalists, broadcasters and public affairs professionals.

BY JOHN RAUGHTER

Objective truth, just the facts, spin or propaganda – the diversity of viewpoints about military public affairs is as wide as the spectrum of opinions about the armed forces. But for the past half century, the common training ground for those entrusted to shape opinions about the U.S. military has been the Defense Information School (DINFOS).

In 1964, then-Defense Secretary Robert McNamara issued a charter to establish the joint school, where the military branches study the principles of mass communication.

In 2013, 2,227 U.S. military servicemembers, international troops and federal employees graduated from one of the school's 30 courses, which range from basic print journalism to broadcast management and just about every related activity in the field of mass communications.

Now located at Fort Meade, Md., the school has an impressive list of alumni, including former Vice President Walter Mondale, late NBC News anchor John Chancellor, Hollywood movie adviser Dale Dye and movie critic Gene Siskel.

"The value of DINFOS as a school that's multimedia cannot be overemphasized," said Clarence Page upon his induction to the DINFOS Hall of Fame in 2013. A Pulitzer Prize-winning columnist for the *Chicago Tribune*, Page attended DINFOS before serving with the Army's 212th Artillery Group at Fort Lewis, Wash. "Though I have a journalism degree, there was so much I learned at DINFOS that I did not learn in journalism school."

Assisting journalists covering the military is also important, says retired Marine Col. Keith Oliver, who chairs DINFOS' Public Affairs Leadership Department. "In the military, especially, trust and integrity demand public accountability. 'Maximum disclosure-minimum delay' is the mantra taught at DINFOS and, except where legitimate security concerns dictate otherwise, the public affairs officer's job is to 'get it out there' – fast."

Prior to the school's founding in 1964, each military branch relied on a variety of schools and individual training to communicate with the public and its internal audiences. Originally located at Fort

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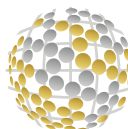
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Benjamin Harrison, Ind., the school relocated to Fort Meade in 1995 and later consolidated the Defense Photography School at Naval Air Station Pensacola, Fla., and the Defense Visual Information School at Lowry Air Force Base, Colo., under its umbrella. DINFOS itself is a component of the Defense Media Activity (DMA).

While it will never be confused with SEAL training, students are aware of the power of the press and affectionately refer to those who graduate from the intensive courses as “DINFOS-trained killers.” In addition to meeting the school’s academic challenges, they’re expected to meet the military standards set forth by their respective service branches.

“What we do here is important,” says Army Col. Jeremy Martin, DINFOS’ commandant. “The public affairs and visual information practitioners who study at Defense Information School go all over the world, in war and peace, to bring no little measure of accountability and transparency to the American people. They expect no less, nor should they. Our motto, ‘Strength through Truth,’ says it all. If our nation is to send America’s sons and daughters into harm’s way, the very least we can do is provide an accurate accounting of their extremely serious and dangerous work, whether those missions are reported by the civilian news media we assist, or with our own cameras, laptops, pens and radio equipment.”

DINFOS’ instruction covers far more than how to publish a compelling article or produce a segment for the Pentagon Channel.

“Classroom teaching is our forte, and we have great success in the online world too, but we also teach by demonstration,” Martin says. “When one of our departments, for example, conducts a graduation ceremony, we are still teaching. We show students how to stage a proper ceremony – to include details like proper lighting, an attractive and accurate printed program, water for the guest speaker.”

While an accredited journalism school usually requires four years of college instruction, DINFOS trains combat correspondents in just 12 weeks. That includes basic writing or broadcast training, with supplementary photography, editing and electronic-journalism coursework.



The Defense Information School (DINFOS), now at Fort Meade, Md., is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year.

The American Legion National Headquarters currently employs at least six DINFOS graduates, including Peter Gaytan, executive director of its Washington office.

“My DINFOS training has proven invaluable to my work in D.C.,” Gaytan says. “The education I received in media and public relations helps me better serve The American Legion when delivering our message to Congress, the administration and national news outlets.”

Lee Harris, who served as the Legion’s national deputy director of public relations, spent eight years as a DINFOS instructor during his Air Force career.

“Time was tight,” he says. “Three weeks is not a long time to teach radio or television skills. The vast majority of (my) students more than 40 years ago headed overseas to provide news and entertainment to those who needed to hear a bit of home.”

From training personnel to act as media representatives to molding journalists, photographers, broadcasters and radio announcers to publicize military news, the mission of DINFOS is much the same as it was 50 years ago: fulfilling the communication needs of the U.S. Armed Forces.

Oliver, who examines the DINFOS model in his book “Command Attention: Promoting Your Organization the Marine Corps Way,” credits the school with refining servicemembers’ professionalism and communication skills. “DINFOS equips the young specialists well to be able to work alongside and assist their civilian counterparts. Initial training – followed by assignments aboard our ships, posts and stations – renders hands-on appreciation for deadlines, photo angles and other aspects of print and broadcast journalism,” he says. “Such value to civilian journalists who find themselves covering American forces is really a byproduct, since military men and women assigned to what academia calls the ‘communication arts’ are storytellers in their own right.”

Though it’s been said that the pen is mightier than the sword, DINFOS ensures that the U.S. military has people equipped to handle both. 🌿

John Raughter, media manager for the national commander of The American Legion, is a 1984 DINFOS graduate.

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HEROES WELCOME

Through the Citizen Honors program, Medal of Honor recipients recognize the extraordinary deeds of ordinary Americans.

BY HENRY HOWARD

Connor Stotts describes his first swimming experience as “frightening.” He was a 10-year-old taking beginner swim lessons with a group of 5- and 6-year-olds.

In time, his skills and confidence in the water increased, and he became a junior lifeguard. Though he never expected to save someone’s life, he knew he could.

That day came July 30, 2011, when the 17-year-old Stotts and his friends were enjoying a typical summer day in Oceanside, Calif. The teens relaxed at a mall then headed to a church barbecue for free food. That evening, on another whim, he decided to get baptized in the ocean.

Afterward, Stotts and five friends went for a swim, and their carefree day turned deadly serious when a rip tide pulled them out to sea.

Instinct took over for Stotts, an Eagle Scout. He quickly assessed the situation, recognizing their immediate danger. He urged his friends to wave their arms and yell to parishioners on the beach. Their frantic pleas for help were returned with smiles and waves. (The group thought the teens were just having fun, they later learned.)

Realizing that help was not coming, Stotts swiftly swam to Belle Ainu’u, grabbing her by the hand and pulling her to safety. Then he went after the others.

Stotts swam to Christian Osuna, his best friend and former high school wrestling teammate, who was “the hardest one to save.” He grabbed Osuna’s hand and tried to get a toehold in the sand. But the current was too strong, dragging away his foot once, twice and then again. Finally, on the fifth try, Stotts secured himself in the sand and used his leverage to pull Osuna from the rip tide.



Connor Stotts received the 2014 Citizen Honors award for saving the lives of three friends caught in a dangerous rip tide near Oceanside, Calif. Photo by Sandy Huffaker



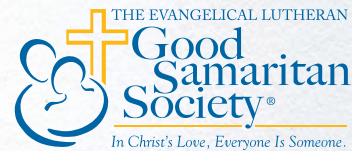
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“(Christian’s) a proud dude,” he says. “When he asked for my help, it was a scary moment. The seriousness of it hit me. He wouldn’t ask for help otherwise. Trying to pull him back in, I swallowed a lot of seawater and experienced that sensation like I was drowning.”

By this time, two other teens had made it back to safety on their own. But there was no time for Stotts to rest. Bella’s sister, Karen, was caught in the riptide and losing consciousness.

Stotts swam to Karen, put her on his back and held her arms around his neck so she wouldn’t slip off. This maneuver kept her afloat but forced him to swim several hundred yards to safety using only one arm. Once he could stand, he carried her back to the beach.

Back on dry land, recovering, the teens reflected on Stotts’ heroism. “That’s when it kind of hit me what happened,” he says. “I was thanking God. It was a powerful night, being baptized and going through the ordeal. I didn’t want a big deal to be made out of it. But I knew in the back of my mind something might happen.”

When Stotts returned home that night, he didn’t tell his parents what had happened. Instead, Brian Stotts – a member of American Legion Post 49 in Albuquerque – and his wife, Gizele, received a flurry of text messages thanking them and their son for his actions. The couple was proud of Connor but couldn’t figure out why he hadn’t talked about what happened at the beach.

“I’m kind of shy,” admits the young man, who’s now a sophomore in the Navy ROTC program at the University of Southern California.

American Legion Post 146 in Oceanside, Calif., was the first organization to honor Stotts, giving him its Citizenship Award. That was followed by

recognition from the Congressional Medal of Honor Foundation, which chose Stotts and two others to receive its 2014 Citizen Honors awards.

Every year, hundreds of Americans are nominated for the Citizen Honors program (aka the Service Before Self Honors). A committee of Medal of Honor recipients narrows the list down to 20, and a separate group selects three nominees to receive medals. The guidelines are simple: nominees must have made a difference in the life of another through an act of extraordinary heroism or through

continued commitment toward putting others first.

“What’s so powerful about it is that all of the nominees did it just out of love,” says Clint Romesha, a former Army staff sergeant who received the Medal of Honor last year for his actions at the Battle of Kamdesh in Afghanistan in 2009. “In the military, we put on a uniform, and we know the inherent risk of danger. But when average American citizens see their countrymen, their

neighbor, their friends, their family in need of help, they react. And they do it because that’s the greatest thing about being in this country: that brotherly love and independent spirit to continue to drive on.”

The other recipients of the 2014 awards were:

- Sharon Landsberry, who accepted the honor on behalf of her husband, Michael, a retired Marine who was shot and killed while trying to protect students in his school from a 12-year-old boy with a gun. Michael, a member of the Nevada Air National Guard, served two tours in Afghanistan.
- Troy Yocum, an Operation Iraqi Freedom Army veteran, who has raised more than \$1.3 million for military families through Active Heroes, a Kentucky-based charity that supports veterans.

The recipients were honored this year during a Medal of Honor Day event at Arlington National Cemetery. The 30 Medal of Honor recipients in attendance applauded the civilian heroes.

“This proves why (the United States) is still the greatest country in the world,” Romesha says. “It’s a great reminder that heroic acts – uncommon valor – are not a thing of the past. They’re still alive and well and thriving.” 🌿

Henry Howard is deputy director of magazine operations for The American Legion.



Courtesy Congressional Medal of Honor Foundation

View the Legion’s updated collection of first-person video stories by Medal of Honor recipients:

🌐 www.legion.org/medallofhonor

Nominations for the Congressional Medal of Honor Foundation’s Citizen Honors are accepted beginning Oct. 1. To nominate someone or learn more about the program, go online:

🌐 cmohfoundation.org/citizen-honors



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Travis Mills talks with the crowd after parachuting into Fort Kent, Maine. Photo by Lucas Carter

HONOR & REMEMBRANCE

Maine post, OEF quadruple amputee team up for veterans museum

American Legion Post 133 in Fort Kent, Maine, worked with a quadruple amputee and the state's first lady for a benefit concert Aug. 9 to raise money for the Northern Maine Veterans Museum & Community Center.

Called Freedom Fest 2014, the event was the first fundraiser for the project, which is supported by Post 133 Commander Duane Belanger and Travis Mills, who lost both his arms and legs to an IED in Kandahar, Afghanistan.

"There are people coming in from Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, driving in from all over," said Belanger, who estimated the turnout at around 1,000 people. "It goes to show that our cause is just. We'll continue to build on this."

Freedom Fest 2014 kicked off with a motorcycle run through Fort Kent, which borders Canada. A hundred motorcyclists wound their way into the concert venue, where they were greeted by "Saluting Marine" Tim Chambers and a group of Young Marines. Later, Mills and first lady Ann LePage dropped into the concert area with members of the All Veterans Group parachute team.

When Mills was wounded in April 2012, The American Legion was the first organization to reach out to his family. Now he helps injured veterans and their loved ones through his foundation.

"The Legion helped my family out when I was at Walter Reed," said Mills, a member of Post 400 in Vassar, Mich. "I didn't have legs yet, so they helped get the ramp set up so I could get inside and be with my family. The Legion put on a couple of benefit dinners for them. They're always calling to ask if there is any more help they can give."

LePage says she is proud to work on the project with the Legion and Mills, who is relocating to Maine. "It is so important to teach the next generation to not take (freedom) for granted," she says. "It means everything to be free."

VERBATIM

Like the great Bob Hope, Robin Williams used his special brand of comedy to entertain troops stationed in 13 countries, while traveling on multiple USO tours. By all accounts, he was warm, engaging and accessible to every servicemember who met him.

Past National Commander Dan Dellinger, on the death of actor and comedian Robin Williams, who he called a "true friend and supporter of the U.S. military and veterans." Dellinger urged servicemembers, veterans and family members contemplating suicide to call the Veterans Crisis Line at **1-800-273-8255**.

MEMBERSHIP

NEW POSTS

Deer Ridge Post 131, Madras, Ore. Chartered Aug. 7 (36 members)

Post 835, Rancho Cucamonga, Calif. Chartered July 31 (15 members)

Post 335, Sylvester, Ga. Chartered July 1 (28 members)

Post 25, Winchester, Ky. Chartered June 13 (15 members)

Quicken Loans Post 13, Detroit Chartered June 13 (37 members)

Richard A. Blakley Post 198, Plainfield, Ind. Chartered May 28 (10 members)

Tumwater Secure Haven Post 11, Tumwater, Wash. Chartered May 28 (21 members)

ECONOMICS

The exploding national debt

Year	Dollar amount
2014	\$17,682,532,332,245
2012	\$16,066,241,407,385
2010	\$13,561,623,030,891
2008	\$10,024,724,896,912
2006	\$8,506,973,899,215
2004	\$7,379,052,696,330
2002	\$6,228,235,965,597
2000	\$5,674,178,209,886

Sources: U.S. Treasury Department and Concord Coalition



Wikimedia Commons

AMERICA

State stats

The average **Mississippi** resident gets 40 minutes more sleep per day than the average resident of **Wisconsin**, the state getting the least sleep. That's about 30 full eight-hour nights more sleep over the course of a year.

When it comes to time spent on personal grooming – washing, dressing and generally getting oneself together for the day ...

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New Yorkers and **Jerseyans** report the most time on travel related to work – more than an hour a day for each state. Workers in **Oregon** and **Alaska** spend about half that much time.

The average employed **North Dakota** resident reports spending eight hours and 16 minutes at work each day. That's the highest average in the country. **Maine's** six hours and 54 minutes is the lowest.

Utah residents report spending only four hours and 27 minutes in leisure activities daily. At the other end of the spectrum, **West Virginia**

residents spend an average of more than six hours a day engaged in leisure activities.

Nearly the entire leisure time difference between Utah and West Virginia can be explained by TV viewing habits in those states – West Virginians spend about 90 more minutes a day glued to the tube than Utah residents. Over the course of a year that works out to a difference of 68 eight-hour workdays.



Source: The Washington Post



China's People's Liberation Army Navy hospital ship Peace Ark departs Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam during RIMPAC 2014. Twenty-two nations, 49 ships, six submarines, more than 200 aircraft and 25,000 personnel participated in the summer exercise in and around the California coast and Hawaiian Islands. Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Justin W. Galvin/DVIDS

MILITARY AFFAIRS

China crashes RIMPAC party

Much was made of China's decision to participate in this year's RIMPAC military exercises. Many observers saw it as a signal that Beijing wanted to be part of the solution in the Asia-Pacific region, rather than part of the problem.

But as the U.S. Naval Institute (USNI) reports, in addition to the four ships China was invited to send, Beijing also sent "an electronic surveillance ship designed to monitor signals" from the 50-some warships participating in the exercise.

China's uninvited spy ship operated just outside U.S. territorial waters around Hawaii "right to the edges of the exercise."

"Given China's recent disregard for principles like freedom of navigation and the peaceful resolution of territorial disputes, it was already a stretch to reward Beijing with an invite to such a prestigious event like RIMPAC," Rep. Randy Forbes, R-Va., chairman of the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Seapower and Projection Forces, told USNI News. "Now we learn they chose to disrespect the 20 other international participants by sailing an intelligence-gathering ship directly into the middle of the exercise. It is clear China is not ready to be a responsible partner and that their first trip to RIMPAC should probably be their last."

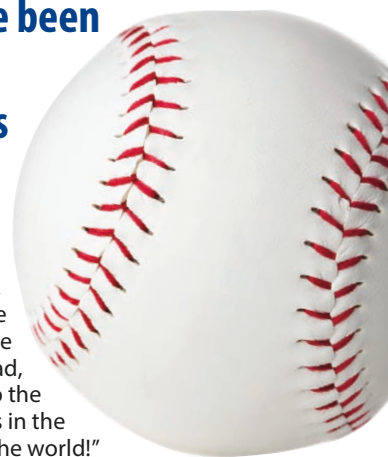
VERBATIM

You've given me the most precious moment in my athletic and coaching career, and I've been coaching a long time ... I need memories like this. I need kids like this. You're all my boys. You're the boys of summer.

Media Bakery

Dave Belisle, coach of the Cumberland, R.I., Little Leaguers, in an inspiring speech to his team after they lost the Little League World Series championship to Chicago 8-7. As the players gathered around him, Belisle told them to not be sad, and that they would be friends forever. "We got down to the nitty-gritty," he declared. "We're one of the best teams in the world. Think about that for a second. In the world!"

Source: The Providence Journal





Volunteers assemble artist Paul Cummins' Blood Swept Lands and Seas of Red, made up of 888,246 ceramic poppies, at the Tower of London on Aug. 3. Each poppy represents a British or Commonwealth soldier killed during World War I. Getty



CENTENNIAL

Post 25, Newport, N.H.

The drum corps of Claude J. Brewster Post 25 in Newport, N.H., represented the state at The American Legion's 12th National Convention in Louisville, Ky., in 1929. Local and state organizations helped fund the trip, which marked the first time New Hampshire Legionnaires marched in a national convention parade. Though their fans back home couldn't see them march in their new red, white and blue uniforms, they did hear the performance on local radio. On the way to Louisville, the group met with President Herbert Hoover at the White House and visited Mount Vernon.

www.centennial.legion.org/new-hampshire/post0025

Share your post's legacy

Upload photos, print material and videos related to your post's history on the Legion's Centennial Celebration page.

www.centennial.legion.org

VERBATIM

We will drown all of you in blood.

The terror group Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), in a video online that showed a picture of a beheaded American and victims of snipers. An offshoot of al-Qaeda, ISIS has claimed broad swaths of land and threatened to kill Americans "in any place" if U.S. airstrikes hit militants.

Source: Reuters



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Sporter champion Antonio "Andre" Gross held onto a commanding lead throughout the Legion's Junior 3-Position Air Rifle Championship in Colorado Springs, Colo. Photo by Lucas Carter

SPORTER

Antonio "Andre" Gross, Webster, N.Y., 2,309.5

Madie Snyder, Kimball, Neb., 2,299.7

Isela Velazquez, Fort Worth, Texas, 2,285.6

Jessica Ebersole, Des Moines, Iowa, 2,276.8

Matthew Velazquez, Buckeye, Ariz., 2,262.3

PRECISION

Michael Steinel, New Philadelphia, Ohio, 2,469.1

Samantha Peterson, Ham Lake, Minn., 2,468.2

Alec Patajo, Vashon, Wash., 2,458.2

Kayla Gadeken, Seward, Neb., 2,457

Maneva Gill, Fortuna, Calif., 2,450.9

SHOOTING SPORTS

Ohio, New York teens win rifle tournament

The 2014 American Legion Junior 3-Position Air Rifle National Championship saw national records broken and one championship won by just nine-tenths of a point.

Antonio "Andre" Gross, sponsored by Post 942 in Webster, N.Y., won the Sporter title, and Michael Steinel, sponsored by Post 357 in Minerva, Ohio, emerged as the winner from a hotly contested Precision group at the U.S. Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, Colo., on Aug. 2. Each winner received a \$5,000 scholarship.

Gross, who finished with an aggregate score of 2,309.5 out of a possible 2,509, maintained a commanding Sporter lead throughout the three-day event. But the Precision title was decided at the final shoot-off, in which the top eight shooters from each category fire 10 scored shots from standing position. Steinel entered the shoot-off trailing Samantha Peterson of Ham Lake, Minn., by two points. He shot a competition-best 101.1 in the final round to squeak out a victory, finishing with an aggregate score of 2,469.1 (out of a possible 2,509) to Peterson's 2,468.2.

Steinel tied a competition record with a score of 200-19x in the kneeling-position round. He joined several other record breakers, including Alec Patajo of Vashon, Wash. Patajo's score of 199-17x in the Precision standing-position round set an overall national record, and his mark of 597-51x in the "three-position by 20" round set Junior Club and Age Group Three records. Peterson tied an event record with a maximum score of 800 in Precision's prone category, and second-place finisher Madie Snyder of Kimball, Neb., set a tournament record in Sporter's kneeling round with a 764-42 mark.

Snyder climbed from eighth place to second after her record-setting performance. But Gross' 13-point lead proved too great a deficit to overcome.

Steinel and Peterson set the stage for their final shoot-off by taking turns sitting atop the leaderboard throughout the

tournament. Steinel claimed a narrow victory, shooting under 10 only four times in the shoot-off.

Steinel represented the United States at the 2014 World Shooting Championship in Granada, Spain, in September.



Michael Steinel, left, Precision champion, and Antonio "Andre" Gross, Sporter champion

ACTIVE DUTY

The military's first Vietnamese-born general

Army Gen. Viet Luong recently became the first Vietnamese-born general officer in the U.S. military. As *Military Times* reports, Luong is the 1st Cavalry Division's deputy commanding general for maneuver. His family fled Vietnam in 1975, when Luong was 9, a day before the fall of Saigon. "We barely escaped," he said.

Luong's family was taken to the aircraft carrier USS *Hancock* and then to Fort Chaffee, Ark., before they finally settled in Los Angeles.

Luong's résumé includes command of a battalion of the 82nd Airborne Division in Iraq and command of the 101st Airborne Division's 3rd Brigade Combat Team in Afghanistan.



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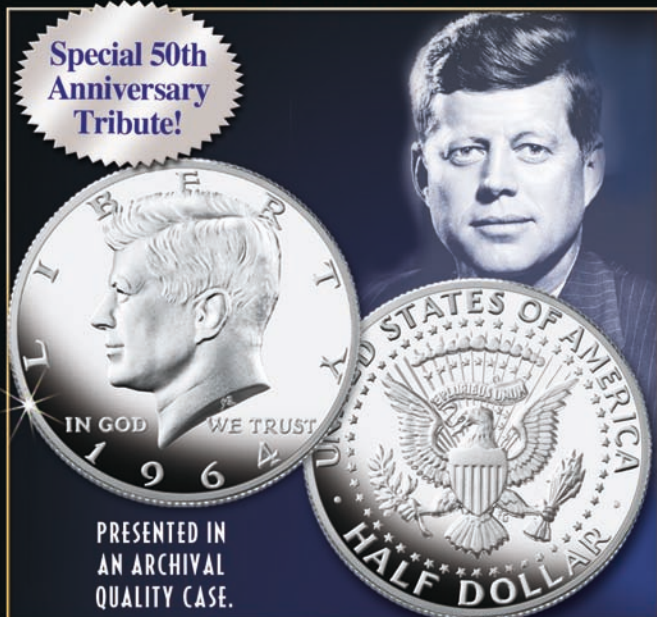
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With an 18-0 victory over Midland, Mich., Post 165, Brooklawn, N.J., Post 72 again won the American Legion World Series – the first time in 40 years that a team has captured back-to-back championship titles. Photo by Lucas Carter

LEGION BASEBALL

NEW JERSEY WINS SECOND STRAIGHT WORLD SERIES

When Brooklawn, N.J., Post 72 and Midland, Mich., Post 165 players took the field for the 88th American Legion World Series (ALWS) championship game Aug. 19, they received handshakes from NASCAR driver Dale Earnhardt Jr.

The tone for the game was set shortly afterward.

In the first inning, Michigan was held scoreless while New Jersey responded with four quick runs off home-plate steals by Adam Fitzgibbon and Pete Farlow and a two-run RBI single from Tre Todd. From then on, the runs poured in for New Jersey, which won last year's ALWS in similar fashion when it enacted the 10-run mercy rule over Petaluma, Calif.

By the top of the seventh, New Jersey had an 18-0 lead over Michigan. The game was called, giving the Mid-Atlantic Regional winners their second consecutive ALWS win and their fourth overall title.

"We came out with four runs, got our nerves out, and it was a smooth run the rest of the way," New Jersey pitcher Tyler Mondile said. "Taking the win again is awesome."

Steven Mondile echoed his brother, saying, "The second win feels better than the first. My pop passed away early in the year, so I'm happy we could win the World Series for him."

New Jersey improved to 54-7 on the season and 5-0 in the ALWS pool play. Michigan ended the season 50-8 and 3-2 in the pool play.

Total paid attendance for the 2014 series was 110,036, eclipsing the 2013 record of 104,726. The championship game had a total paid attendance of nearly 8,000, a single-game record.

Brooklawn, N.J., center fielder Peter Farlow slides into second as Midland, Mich., second baseman Derrek Clyde awaits the throw. Photo by Lucas Carter



BASEBALL AWARDS

George W. Rulon Player of the Year

Sean Breen, Brooklawn, N.J.

Rawlings Big Stick Award

Anthony Harrold and Sean Breen, Brooklawn, N.J., and Kyle Pausche, Jacksonville, Fla.

Louisville Slugger Batting Champion

Sean Breen, Brooklawn, N.J., .579 batting average

Dr. Irvin L. "Click" Cowger RBI Memorial Award

Jordan Mopas, Waipahu, Hawaii, 13 RBIs

Bob Feller Pitching Award

Jake Meyers, Omaha, Neb., 29 strikeouts in regionals and World Series tournaments

James F. Daniel Jr. Memorial Sportsmanship Award

Tanner Gross, Midland, Mich.

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“My cell phone company wants to lock me in on a two-year contract!” Not Jitterbug, there’s no contract to sign and no penalty if you discontinue your service.



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Long Distance Calls	No add'l charge	No add'l charge
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AWARDS

Legion honors service academy graduates

Each year, The American Legion sponsors awards given to exceptional students at each of the five military academies.

This past spring, the Legion's national vice commanders presented the 2014 awards to the recipients at their graduation ceremonies.



2nd Lt. Blake Abrecht
Farmington, Ark.

Abrecht received the Legion's award for the highest proficiency in all academic subjects at the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colo. National Vice Commander Douglas Wooddell presented the award.



Ens. Justin Chock
Honolulu

Chock received the Legion's award for the highest marks in English, history and government courses at the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md. National Vice Commander Robert Newman presented the award.



Ens. Nicholas Grippo
Middletown, N.J.

Grippo received the Legion's award in the category of national security at the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy in Kings Point, N.Y. National Vice Commander William Rakestraw presented the award.



Ens. Adam Scalesse
Longview, Wash.

Scalesse received the Legion's award for excellence in athletics at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy in New London, Conn. National Vice Commander Paul Dillard presented the award.



2nd Lt. Louis Tobergte
Hebron, Ky.

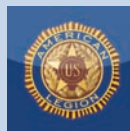
Tobergte received the Legion's award for the highest standing in chemistry at the U.S. Military Academy in West Point, N.Y. National Vice Commander Wayne Satrom presented the award.

TECHNOLOGY

The Legion family of apps

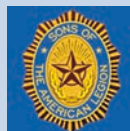
The American Legion is taking advantage of the latest in mobile developments to connect with members wherever and however it can. To that end, the Legion continues to develop smartphone applications (or "apps") that give Legion Family members the opportunity to stay up-to-date and in touch.

Among the apps currently available for download:



The American Legion Offers short descriptions of the Legion's forms of advocacy, as well as opportunities to join, donate and locate nearby posts

Claims Coach Provides step-by-step guidance to help you and your service officer through the process of filing for VA benefits



Sons of The American Legion Everything you need to know about SAL, which exists to strengthen the Legion's four pillars

National Convention Maps, alerts, information and updates to have in your pocket while in the national convention city

American Legion Baseball Follow your favorite teams as they compete, from regional tournaments to the American Legion Baseball World Series

All apps can be downloaded free of charge from the Apple Store or Google Play. Connect to the stores directly on your smartphone; simply type the name of the app into the search box.

EDUCATION



Selected Reserve education benefits

Q: *I just graduated from high school and have decided to enlist in the Coast Guard Reserve. Will I be eligible to receive GI Bill benefits?*

A: Members of the Selected Reserve – including the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, Army National Guard and Air National Guard – are eligible for MGIB-SR (Chapter 1606). The reserve and Guard components decide who is eligible for the program. Eligibility requirements include a six-year obligation in the Selected Reserve, completion of initial active duty for training, meeting the requirements for a high school diploma or equivalency certificate before applying for benefits, and remaining in good standing in a Selected Reserve unit.

Valerie Heffner is a Marine Corps veteran and member of American Legion Post 27 in Arizona. askvalerie@legion.org

How a Chicago Doctor Shook Up the Hearing Aid Industry with his Newest Invention

New nearly invisible digital hearing aid breaks price barrier in affordability

Reported by J. Page

Chicago: Board-certified physician Dr. S. Cherukuri has done it once again with his newest invention of a medical grade **ALL DIGITAL affordable hearing aid**.

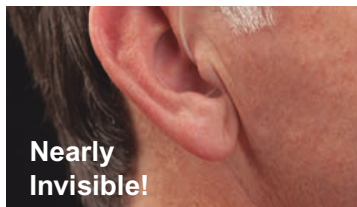
This new digital hearing aid is packed with all the features of \$3,000 competitors at a mere fraction of the cost. **Now, most people with hearing loss are able to enjoy crystal clear, natural sound—in a crowd, on the phone, in the wind—without suffering through “whistling” and annoying background noise.**

New Digital Hearing Aid Outperforms Expensive Competitors

This sleek, lightweight, fully programmed hearing aid is the outgrowth of the digital revolution that is changing our world. While demand for “all things digital” caused most prices to plunge (consider DVD players and computers, which originally sold for thousands of dollars and today can be purchased for less), yet the cost of a digital medical hearing aid remained out of reach.

Dr. Cherukuri knew that many of his patients would benefit but couldn't afford the expense of these new digital hearing aids. Generally they are *not* covered by Medicare and most private health insurance.

The doctor evaluated all the high priced digital hearing aids on the market, broke them down to their base components, and then created his own affordable version—called the MDHearingAid® **AIR** for its virtually invisible, lightweight appearance.



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FDA Guidance and Consumer Education

The FDA states that only FDA-registered hearing aids, such as the MDHearingAid AIR should be used to help people with hearing loss. Imitation “Personal Sound Amplifiers (PSAPs)” are not a substitute for hearing aids and can, in fact, lead to more damage in your hearing.

The MDHearingAid® **AIR** is FDA registered. **This doctor designed and approved hearing aid comes with a full year's supply of long-life batteries. It delivers crisp, clear sound all day long and the soft flexible ear buds are so comfortable you won't realize you're wearing them.**

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Of course, hearing is believing and we invite you to try it for yourself with our RISK-FREE 45-day home trial. If you are not completely satisfied, simply return it within that time period for a full refund of your purchase price.

Can a hearing aid delay or prevent dementia?

A study by Johns Hopkins and National Institute on Aging researchers suggests older individuals with hearing loss are significantly more likely to develop dementia over time than those who retain their hearing. They suggest that an intervention—such as a hearing aid—could delay or prevent dementia by improving hearing!

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“I have used many expensive hearing aids, some over \$5,000. The Airs have greatly improved my enjoyment of life” —Som Y., Michigan

“I would definitely recommend them to my patients with hearing loss” —Amy S., Audiologist, Munster, Indiana



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Not available in the state of Washington

ASK A SERVICE OFFICER

Veteran ID cards



Cajun Comeau
Department Service
Officer, North Carolina

Q: Where can I get an ID card for discounts to restaurants and retailers?

A: Unfortunately, the federal government doesn't issue a veteran ID card for the purpose of discounts. The Department of Defense (DoD) issues cards only to active-duty servicemembers, drilling

reservists, retired personnel and their dependents. And VA only issues cards to veterans currently enrolled in the VA health-care system.

However, many states – including Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Texas, North Carolina, Virginia and Michigan – have veteran ID cards that can be used to receive discounts from retailers and restaurants. Veterans can request the card from their local Department of Motor Vehicles office and are usually required to provide the following information:

- An honorable discharge status from the U.S. Armed Forces
- A DD 214, proving service, that lists branch of service, discharge date and discharge status
- A valid, unexpired driver's license

Meanwhile, the Veteran Health Identification Card (VHIC), issued by VA, is for identification and check-in at VA appointments. It cannot be used as a credit or insurance card, and it does not authorize or pay for care at non-VA facilities.

In February, VA began issuing VHICs to newly enrolled veterans and enrolled veterans who were not previously issued the old Veteran Identification Card (VIC) but requested an identification card. As of May, VA had mailed VHICs to 6 million enrolled veterans.

Enrolled veterans who do not have a VIC or VHIC may contact their local VA medical center's enrollment coordinator to arrange to have their pictures taken for the new cards, or they may request a VHIC at their next VA health-care appointment. Veterans must provide proper identification to receive the new cards.

Find an American Legion service officer in your state: www.legion.org/serviceofficers

Do you have a question for Department of North Carolina Service Officer Cajun Comeau about the claims process or veterans benefits in general? Send it to askso@legion.org.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Get connected

The American Legion's social media presence continues to expand, with a Twitter following that has grown by 8,000 in the past six months and a monthly Facebook reach that exceeds 400,000, plus new platforms.



HOW DO YOU LIKE US?

For news, photos, videos and more, scroll through our Facebook pages. The biggest audience is found on the **American Legion Online Update** page, a source for news on veterans, national security and other issues Legionnaires care about.

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www.legion.org/facebook



PINTEREST

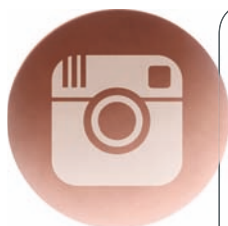
The Legion's boards are filled with patriotism, history and other inspirations.

FOLLOW ON PINTEREST
www.pinterest.com/talhq

RETWEET AFTER ME

More than 35,000 followers receive a steady stream of brief updates about Legion programs, legislative alerts, and links to stories, photos and videos about the military and veterans.

FOLLOW ON TWITTER
[@AmericanLegion](https://twitter.com/AmericanLegion)



INSTAGRAM

This photo-sharing site gives you access to behind-the-scenes American Legion images, and bonus art from events and activities covered by Legion media staff.

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"Never Forgotten" Dog Tag Pendant



Back at actual size

Honor with pride the incomparable courage of U.S. Military personnel who were taken as prisoners of war or listed as missing in action with the "Never Forgotten" Dog Tag Pendant. It is a truly symbolic fine jewelry exclusive honoring those who served and fought for our nation's freedom at the ultimate expense. The memory of these highly-regarded heroes will live on in our hearts forever, and will never be forgotten.

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Crafted of solid stainless steel with black ion plating, the "Never Forgotten" Dog Tag Pendant features a dramatically sculpted dimensional eagle, its mighty wings stretched out beneath the POW-MIA logo. A sculpted banner displays the heartfelt sentiment "You are not forgotten."

www.bradfordexchange.com/POWMIA

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Engraved on the back are the poignant words, "Freedom has always been worth fighting for," along with an etched American flag and a silhouette of 3 soldiers. A unique bail with stars and stripes and a 24" chain complete this striking tribute. Plus, The Bradford Exchange is proud to announce that *a portion of the proceeds from the sale of each pendant will be donated to help the families of POWs and those missing in action.*

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The perfect way to show your remembrance, or to give as a very meaningful gift, this magnificent dog tag pendant can be yours for just \$79*, payable in four convenient installments of \$19.75. To reserve a pendant in your name, backed by our unconditional 120-day guarantee, send no money now. Just fill out and send in your Reservation Application today. But hurry—this is a limited time offer! Order today!

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PERSONAL FINANCE



Don't put yourself at risk for identity theft

FOCUS ON FINANCES



J.J. MONTANARO

I recently received an email that made me chuckle. "Delevery Global Postal Services" was reaching out to say it had attempted to drop off my package. There was just one problem: I hadn't ordered anything. This and the company's lack of spelling skills were a dead giveaway that this was a phishing expedition. Shift + delete.

Have you received such an email? A Javelin Strategy & Research identity fraud study estimates that 13 million people were victims of some sort of identity theft last year. The fastest growing trend: account takeover. Here's a three-step framework to survive this crazy new world:

Protect Obviously you don't want to share your personal data, but take proactive steps. Use a shredder to dispose of important papers, mail, preapproved credit card offers, and receipts containing account and personal information. Protect yourself while browsing by being aware of how and where you're accessing the Internet; public Wi-Fi access could also make you vulnerable to thieves. Install the latest security software on your computers, and if your providers offer multiple layers of protection, take advantage. Don't use your Social Security number or other personal info as a login ID or password. And minimize the use of checks.

Alert Ever shred or throw away a piece of mail because you didn't recognize it immediately? Be careful; that could be a change-of-address notification your provider is sending to confirm you've moved, or that an identity thief has claimed for you. This is a common technique in account takeovers. Review transactions in your financial accounts weekly, and periodically check your credit report for discrepancies. Many banks allow you to set terms for alerts so that you're immediately notified of certain charges or transactions.

Respond If something bad happens, contact your bank or other providers. Submit a fraud alert to the three major credit bureaus. File a police report if you're a victim. Sign up for credit monitoring services, and note what you've done and to whom you've spoken.

Maybe you've looked enviously at somebody and thought, "It sure would be nice to be them." Well, there are identity thieves out there right now thinking the same thing about you, and they're willing to take it a step further. Javelin pegged identity fraud losses for 2013 at more than \$18 billion. Let's drive that number down.

J.J. Montanaro is a certified financial planner with USAA, The American Legion's preferred provider of financial services. Submit questions for him online.

 www.legion.org/usaa/focusonfinances

MEMBER DISCOUNTS

Treating hearing loss may help prevent falls

Every year, approximately one-third of American adults 65 and older experience a fall, according to a report from the Healthcare Cost and Utilization Project. The direct medical costs for fall-related injuries among the elderly exceeds \$20 billion annually, and is expected to increase as the U.S. population continues to age.

In discussing how to prevent falls, we typically talk about obvious causes, such as uneven floors or outdoor surfaces, slippery bathtubs, loose rugs and health conditions. New research points to another possible cause: hearing loss, which affects an estimated 10 percent of the U.S. population and nearly one-third of adults 60 and older.

People with even a mild hearing loss of 25 decibels are three times more likely to fall than those in the normal-hearing population, and each additional 10 decibels increases the risk of falling by 1.4 times, according to a Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine researcher who studied 2,000 adults ages 40 to 69.

Researchers aren't certain why hearing loss contributes to the risk of falling. They hypothesize that people who can't hear well may not have a good overall awareness of their environment, making them more susceptible to tripping and falling. Hearing loss may also place a large "cognitive

load" on individuals, interfering with their ability to maintain balance and gait.

Lastly, people who cannot hear well tend to stay by themselves and may be less active, according to the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA). Reduced physical activity, in turn, may increase the likelihood of a fall.

If you suspect hearing loss, HearPO providers are qualified to test your hearing and, if necessary, provide treatment with hearing aids. HearPO is a member discount provider for The American Legion. Call **1-888-689-6281** or visit www.hearpo.com/legion to schedule an appointment.



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PATRIOTISM

AMERICA'S TALLEST FLAGPOLE

The “world’s tallest tribute to freedom” is a flagpole about 100 feet taller than the Statue of Liberty, with a flag that’s four stories high, standing in a most unlikely location: an insurance company campus in Sheboygan, Wis.

Acuity CEO Ben Salzmann says he wants the flag to comfort and inspire those that have served in the U.S. military, as well as challenge the country “to remain a key player in making this world better.”

The flag was dedicated June 16, at a ceremony that included Gov. Scott Walker, an American Legion rifle volley, Navy SEALs and a color guard. Former “American Idol” finalist Danny Gokey sang the national anthem.

A video describing the pole’s construction has gone viral, with over 2 million views and 60,000 likes on Facebook.

Acuity has received hundreds of messages from people inspired by the sight of the flag, including those with terminal illnesses and others who have lost loved ones.

“If you put up a flag, you don’t own it,” Salzmann says. “You’re a custodian.”

Beneath the banner, engraved bricks bear the names of Wisconsin servicemembers killed in action.

Go online to watch a video about the Acuity flagpole:

 www.acuity.com/flag

400	The pole’s height, in feet
7,200	The flag’s square footage
3.5	The measurement of each star, in feet
4	The width of each stripe, in feet
420,000	The pole’s weight, in pounds
220	Weight of the flag flown in normal conditions
350	Weight of the flag flown in harsh weather
500	Gallons of paint covering the pole
680	Cubic yards of concrete used in the pole’s foundation
-42	Lowest temperature the pole is designed to withstand (Fahrenheit)

Wow! A Simple to Use Computer Designed Especially for Seniors!

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"I love this computer! It is easy to read and to use! I get photo updates from my children and grandchildren all the time."

– Janet F.

Have you ever said to yourself "I'd love to get a computer, if only I could figure out how to use it." Well, you're not alone. Computers were supposed to make our lives simpler, but they've gotten so complicated that they are not worth the trouble. With all of the "pointing and clicking" and "dragging and dropping" you're lucky if you can figure out where you are. Plus, you are constantly worrying about viruses and freeze-ups. If this sounds familiar, we have great news for you. There is finally a computer that's designed for simplicity and ease of use. It's the WOW Computer, and it was designed with you in mind. This computer is easy-to-use, worry-free and literally puts the world at your

fingertips. From the moment you open the box, you'll realize how different the WOW Computer is. The components are all connected; all you do is plug it into an outlet and your high-speed Internet connection. Then you'll see the screen – it's now 22 inches. This is a completely new touch screen system, without the cluttered look of the normal computer screen. The "buttons" on the screen are easy to see and easy to understand. All you do is touch one of them, from the Web, Email, Calendar to Games—you name it... and a new screen opens up. It's so easy to use you won't have to ask your children or grandchildren for help. Until now the very people who could benefit most from E-mail and the Internet are the ones that have had the hardest time accessing it. Now, thanks to the WOW Computer, countless older Americans are discovering the wonderful world of the Internet every day. Isn't it time

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FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Food fight



Media Bakery

Hitting back at U.S. economic sanctions and diplomatic condemnation in the wake of the crisis in Ukraine, Russia is targeting popular U.S. fast-food restaurants McDonald's, KFC, Burger King and Wendy's.

Municipal public-health regulators in Russia allege that McDonald's "misrepresented the fat content and nutritional values of its cheeseburgers, Filet-O-Fish sandwiches and shakes," *The Los Angeles Times* reports. Russian regulators closed four Moscow McDonald's restaurants due to sanitary issues and announced in August that they will begin

unscheduled inspections, citing "complaints about the quality and safety" of the fast-food giant. And federal agencies have launched "a Russia-wide investigation" into whether McDonald's, which has 430 restaurants in Russia, is using banned antibiotics in cheese.

"The suspicion is that because McDonald's is one of the symbols of America, that's why it's encountering problems now," said BBC Moscow correspondent Steve Rosenberg. The BBC reports that Russian parliament members have also called for similar inspections for Burger King and KFC franchises.

Wendy's faces a different but likely related problem. Wendy's has decided to pull out of the Russian market after just three years, due to unwillingness of its Russian partners to invest in the brand. A Wendy's spokesman told the *Times* the Russian franchisee "has not expressed interest in growing Wendy's business in Russia, nor shown they have the resources to successfully operate the existing restaurants on a long-term basis."

Wendy's planned to open 180 stores in Russia, but its halfhearted partner opened only eight restaurants in more than three years.

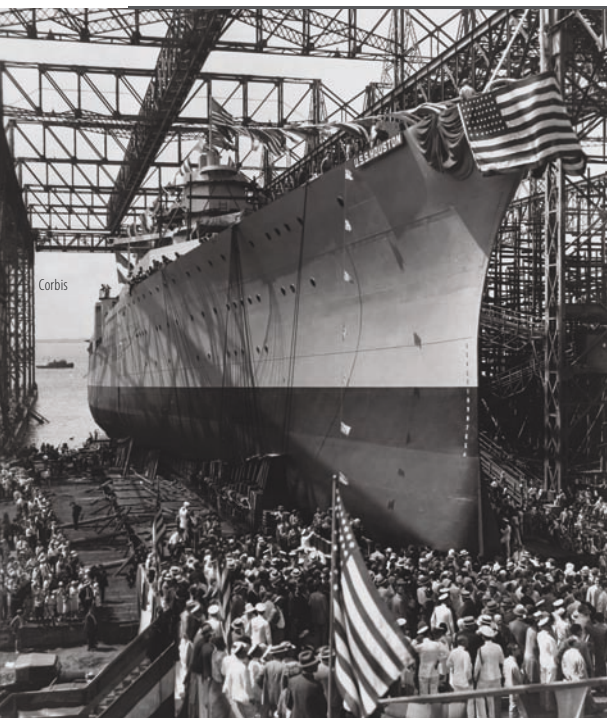


AP

VERBATIM

Some of these city councils only become aware of what their police have and what they've been doing in the wake of a tragedy. Then members ... start asking questions that should have been asked initially. Does this community that hasn't had a murder in 10 years need an armored personnel carrier?

Tim Lynch, director of the Project on Criminal Justice at the libertarian Cato Institute, on the White House's decision to review the DoD program that sends military-grade equipment to local police departments. The announcement followed several nights of protests in Ferguson, Mo., following the shooting of an unarmed black teenager in August.



Corbis

HISTORY

USS *Houston*, 'Gallop Ghost,' found in Java Sea

The undersea wreck of a large vessel in the Java Sea has been confirmed to be USS *Houston*, a Navy cruiser that sank in battle during World War II, the *Daily Mail* reports. The sea separates many of Indonesia's larger islands.

Of the 1,068 crewmen who served aboard *Houston*, only 291 sailors and Marines survived both the attack and being prisoners of war, according to the paper, which notes that "the wreck has long been a popular recreational diving site."

The Navy hopes that will change. "In my discussions with our Indonesian navy partners," U.S. Pacific Fleet Commander Adm. Harry Harris reports, "they share our sense of obligation to protect this and other gravesites." According to Harris, "surveying the site, of course, was only the first step in partnering to respect those sailors who made the ultimate sacrifice to ensure the freedoms and security that we richly enjoy today."

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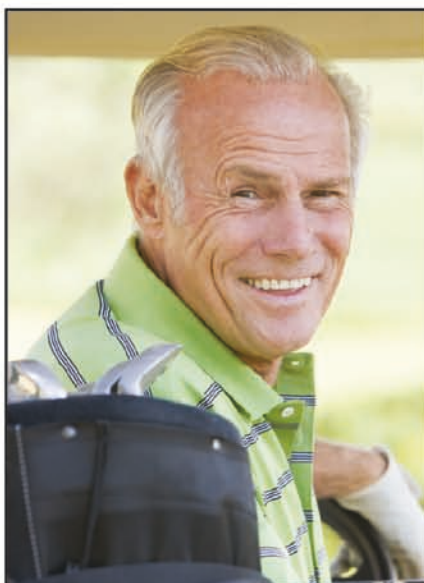


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How to submit a reunion

The American Legion Magazine publishes reunion notices for veterans. Send notices to **The American Legion Magazine, Attn: Reunions, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206**, fax (317) 630-1280, e-mail reunions@legion.org or submit information via our website, www.legion.org/reunions.

Include the branch of service and complete name of the group, no abbreviations, with your request. The listing also should include the reunion dates and city, along with a contact name, telephone number and e-mail address. Listings are publicized free of charge.

Your notice will appear on our Web site within a week and will remain available online until the final day of your reunion. Upon submission, please allow three months for your reunion to be published in print. **Due to the large number of reunions, The American Legion Magazine will publish a group's listing only once a year.**

Notices should be sent at least six months prior to the reunion to ensure timely publication.

Other notices

"In Search Of" is a means of getting in touch with people from your unit to plan a reunion. **We do not publish listings that seek people for interviews, research purposes, military photos or help in filing a VA claim.** Listings must include the name of the unit from which you seek people, the time period and the location, as well as a contact name, telephone number and e-mail address. Send notices to **The American Legion Magazine, Attn: "In Search Of," P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206**, fax (317) 630-1280 or e-mail reunions@legion.org.

The magazine will not publish names of individuals, only the name of the unit. Listings are published free of charge.

Life Membership notices are published for Legionnaires who have been awarded life

memberships by their posts. **This does not include a member's own Paid-Up-For-Life membership.** Notices must be submitted on official forms, which may be obtained by sending a self-addressed stamped envelope to **The American Legion Magazine, Attn: Life Memberships, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206.**

"Comrades in Distress" listings must be approved by the Legion's Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation division. If you are seeking to verify an injury received during service, contact your Legion department service officer for information on how to publish a notice.

To respond to a "Comrades in Distress" listing, send a letter to **The American Legion Magazine, Attn: Comrades in Distress, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206.** Include the listing's CID number in your response.

"Taps" notices are published only for Legionnaires who served as department commanders or national officers.

AIR FORCE / ARMY AIR FORCES

44th Air Refueling Sqdn 4045th Air Refueling Wing SAC, Lake Charles, LA, 4/21-25, John Vaughan, (337) 625-9254, wdbeeber@aol.com;
91st Strat Recon Wing (McGuire AFB, 1948-1949, Yokota AB, 1950-1954, Barksdale AFB, 1950-1951 & Lockbourne AFB, 1951-1957) - 6091st SRS, 91st Bomb Wing (1963-1968), 91st Space/Missile Wing (1968-2014), 91st Bomb Grp (WWII) & Lockbourne AFB Reunion Grp, Savannah, GA, 5/17-22, Jim Bard, (410) 549-1094, jimbardjr@comcast.net; **Fire Protection**, Beaver Creek, OH, 5/15-17, Karl Hainisch, (864) 556-5951, usaffirefighterreunion2015@yahoo.com; **Redhorse Assn**, Fort Walton Beach, FL, 10/12-16, Greg Macdougall, (912) 884-7273, greg.macdougall@rhmail.org; **Rhein Main AB**, Leavenworth, WA, 7/22-26, Stan Miller, (910) 922-4383, rmvets@gmail.com

ARMY

66th Inf Div, Charleston, SC, 6/23-28, Lenore Angelo, (814) 948-9747, pvoangelo@msn.com;
78th Cbt Eng Bn SE Grp, Chattanooga, TN, 10/5-8, Marcia Webb, (404) 294-0514, mwsnowflake@juno.com; **82nd Abn Div (Opn Power Pack, Dominican Republic, 1965)**, Fayetteville, NC, 5/18-22, John Urbach, baltoscouter@comcast.net; **168th Cbt Eng Bn**, Omaha, NE, 5/28-31, Bob Ekdahl, (402) 496-0688, roe91239@gmail.com; **192nd AHC & Attached Units**, San Diego, 11/6-8, Larry Hicks, (618) 244-1123, larryhicks@yahoo.com; **Echo Co 2/5th Cav 1st Cav Airmobile**, Branson, MO, 4/22-26, Mick DeHart, (937) 335-2131, michael.dehart754@gmail.com; **H & HC 222nd Avn Btn (Vietnam)**, Washington, 10/16-19, Bob James, (330) 872-7907, mrjms44444@aol.com

JOINT

Naval School Underwater Swimmers - Recon & Force Recon, Panama City, FL, 5/14-17, Aaron Farrior, (850) 240-7417, bare4a@cox.net

MARINES

7th Mar Scout Sniper Plt (Vietnam), Dearborn, MI, 10/2-6, Colin McGee, (313) 410-0791, cpmcgee1@hotmail.com

NAVY

Altamaha CVE 18, Seattle, 10/30-11/2, Dave Hoy, (207) 230-0347, ahoyther@roadrunner.com;
Attack Sqdn VA-163 "Saints", Pensacola, FL, 11/5-8, Gordon Hunter, (770) 475-0713, gordonhunter60@gmail.com; **Bathyscaphe**

Trieste II DSV 1 & Point Loma AGDS 2, Branson, AZ, 5/7-11, Stan Reinhold, (623) 332-1764, sreinhold@cox.net; **Charles F. Adams DDG 2**, Branson, MO, 4/19-24, Richard Harmon, (386) 235-2723, dharmonlpga@aol.com; **Conyngham DD 371/DDG 17**, Savannah, GA, 5/3-7, Warren Wilde, (717) 334-8963, wwilde@embargmail.com; **Gen. H.W. Butner AP 113**, Wabash, IN, 4/23-26, Duane Truss, (260) 563-1614, dbtruss@frontier.com; **Pamina AKA 34/Tanner AGS 15**, Jacksonville, FL, 4/22-26, Tom McDowell, (904) 203-2916, kathy-ortom61@gmail.com; **Tattall DDG 19**, Branson, MO, 4/19-24, Richard Harmon, (386) 235-8723, dhamonlpga@aol.com; **Yorktown CV/CVA/CVS 10 (Crew, Sqdns, Air Grps & Marines, 1943-1970)**, Mount Pleasant, SC, 10/16-18, Alix Adams, (843) 849-1928, aadams@ussyorktown.net

LIFE MEMBERSHIPS

Post 152, FL: E. Bulloch, Troy Pazos, Charmaine Zimmerer
Post 163, FL: William F. Abt, Hugh R. Short
Post 318, FL: Daryl Bowie, James E. Burk, Albert R. Devlin, Ronald A. Dold, Samuel D. Dransfield, Monroe Horan, Francis Howard, Dorothy Kearns, Joseph E. Ruch, Walter E. Sweeney
Post 340, FL: John W. Ellis, Gary Geyer, Brian K. Harris, James M. Harvey, Charles M. Petro Jr., Clinton L. Stokes
Post 356, FL: David W. Braver, Bobby J. Dement Jr., Gary E. Hallaway, Timothy A. Julian, Terry E. Phillips, Austin E. Pettit
Post 71, MN: Jerome H. Svec
Post 189, MO: Ronald P. Doyon, Ralph Gossman, Roy Nelson, Larry Sage

IN SEARCH OF

1st Spec Serv Forces HQ Co (Rome-Arno, Naples Foggia, Southern France & Germany Campaigns and Aleutian Islands, Dec 1942-Dec 1944), Daniel Drowne, (518) 561-8629
9th Inf Div 2/39th Echo Co (Bearcat, Dong Tam, Vietnam, June 1967-June 1968), Wayne Henninger, (570) 874-2417
87th AAA 97th Grp AAA Baseball Team (Okinawa, 1952-1953), Brud Coombs, (845) 855-3376
93rd AMES (Castle AFB, CA, 1959-1962), Joseph Halado, (773) 592-6017
330th Ord Bn Personnel (Camp Pickett, VA, 1950-1952), Bernie Jacobs, (410) 266-8154
474th Inf Rgt Cannon Co (Dec 1944-June 1945), Daniel Drowne, (518) 561-8629
590th Trans Co (Flak Kaserne, Ludwigsburg, Germany), Robert Bandi, (815) 633-2181
591st & 595th Eng Cos (LE) (1966-1972), Ken Kiel, (414) 529-7731, kconst@wi.rr.com
604th AC&W Sqdn (Freising, Vimy Kaserne, Germany, Feb 1958-Apr 1961), Bob Merrick, (610) 355-2219

4000th Aerospace App Grp (Offutt AFB, 1979-1982), Lyle Lionberger, (940) 368-3686
B Co 813th Eng Avn Bn, C Co 828th Eng Avn Bn & C Co 832nd Eng Avn Bn (Beale AFB, CA, 1955-1956), Joseph Twitchell, (208) 587-3958
C Co 4th Bn 1st Bde 1st Plt Basic Tng (Fort Bragg, NC, May 1968-July 1968), William Hilliard, (706) 469-2089
H & HC 222nd Avn Bn (Vietnam, 1965-1966), Bob James, (330) 872-7907
Inchon Landing Army Inf Replacements (Nov 13, 1950), Adrien Freeman, (770) 973-3763
NAVCOMMSTA Naval Stn Sangley Point, Philippines (Jan 1959-June 1960), R. Thompson, tomsanz@windstream.net
R.K. Huntington DD 781 (1960-1964), Kenneth Seiple, (740) 537-4407
Rodney M. Davis FFG 60 Plankowners (Precommissioning & Commissioning Crew, 1986-1987), Curtis Cassano, (518) 222-3262
VMFA-232 (El Toro, Chu Lai & Iwakuni, 1968-1970), Gus Fitch, (803) 649-6466

TAPS

J.G. "Lupe" Garza, Dept. of Texas, Dept. Cmdr. 2011-2012, and Nat'l Sec. Cncl. Vice Chmn. 2002-2007 and 2008-2014.
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If beauty is a curse, I'm more of a mild invective.

MY NEIGHBOR wore both of his winter jackets when he painted his house last summer. The directions on the can said, "Put on two coats."

THE BARBER said to a new patron while sharpening his razors in the air, "I've been in business 35 years and never lost an ear."

"That's nice," the patron replied, "but what about your customers?"

IT'S BETTER to be healthy than wise. Being sick costs you money, but you can be stupid for free.

A MAN walked into a psychiatrist's office with a cucumber up his nose, a carrot in his left ear and a banana in his right.

"What's the matter with me?" he asked.

"You're not eating properly."

WHY DO BAGPIPERS always walk while they play? To get away from the noise.

POLICE ARE CALLED to an apartment and find a woman holding a bloody 5-iron over an unconscious man.

"Is that your husband?" the detective asks.

"Yes," the woman replies.

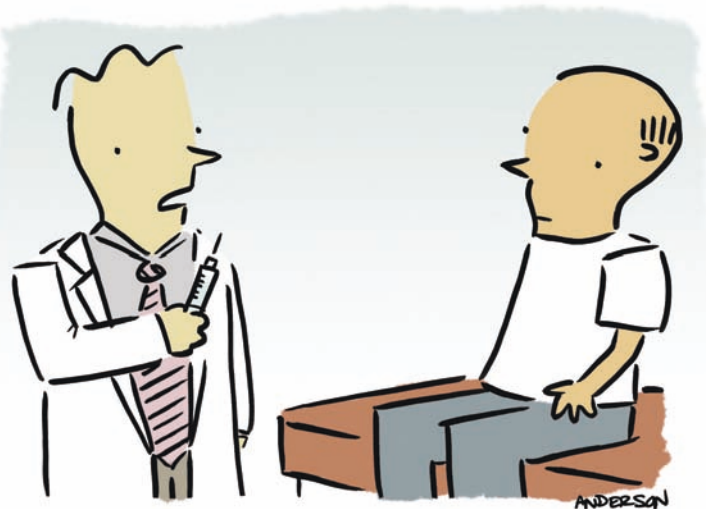
"Did you hit him with that golf club?"

"Yes, yes, I did."

The woman begins to sob.

"How many times did you hit him?"

"I don't know – five, six, maybe seven times. Just put me down for a five."



"You'll feel a little pinch, then another pinch, and then a few more because I'm pretty bad at this."



"Why can't you use GPS like other people?"

PEOPLE always called my uncle crazy because he wore one red and one blue sock, rather than trousers and a shirt.

I HAVE a diversified portfolio. That's when your money goes down the drain in six different sinks.

ONE HUSBAND said to another, "I think my wife is getting tired of me."

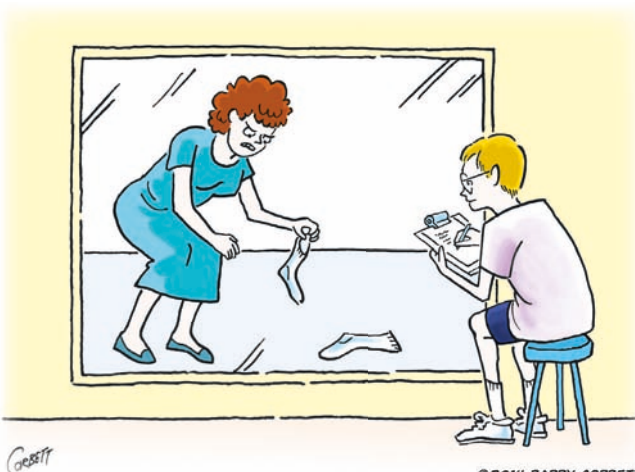
"Why do you think that?" the other man asked.

"She keeps wrapping my lunches in road maps."

I LIKE political jokes – until they get elected.

HE'S SO CHEAP that his idea of a 20-percent tip is 20 percent of what anyone else would leave.

"TEXAS GOV. RICK PERRY announced plans to send 1,000 National Guard troops to increase security. If you really want to slow down the flow of illegal immigrants, send the TSA." – Seth Meyers



As a child, Timothy often tested his mother's patience.



ACTOS® AND DIABETES PATIENTS



ACTOS®, also known as pioglitazone, is a medication prescribed for Type II Diabetes, manufactured by the Japanese company Takeda Pharmaceutical Company. Takeda began a 10-year epidemiological study to determine the safety of Actos®. During the five-year interim analysis of the study in **August 2011**, the results found that there was a **40% increased risk of bladder cancer**.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has issued a warning to all physicians prescribing Actos®. The FDA is also aware of a recent epidemiological study conducted in France, which suggests an increased risk of bladder cancer with pioglitazone. Based on the results of this study, France has suspended the use of pioglitazone and Germany has recommended not to start pioglitazone in new patients.

If you, a family member, or a loved one has bladder cancer and has ACTOS®, you may be entitled to compensation. Please **contact the Branch Law Firm**, a well-known national law firm that has been in business over 45 years, for a **free initial interview** and **consultation**.

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GranuFlo Recall

In June 2012, the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued a Class I recall of GranuFlo Dry Acid Concentrate and Naturalyte Liquid, a dialysis product used in the treatment of acute and chronic renal (kidney) failure during hemodialysis. **Class I recalls are used for dangerous or defective products that may cause serious health problems or even death.**

GranuFlo, manufactured by Fresenius Medical Care, has been found to contain far more acetate than rival products, resulting in elevated bicarbonate levels – a significant risk factor for cardiac arrest in dialysis patients.

If you or a loved one has experienced a cardiac event, stroke, or death following the use of GranuFlo, then you may be entitled to compensation. The Branch Law Firm, a nationally known law firm, is handling these types of cases and specifically representing clients on a national basis regarding GranuFlo. Call for a confidential interview, **1-800-828-4529** or **1-800-243-3545** and visit our website at **www.branchlawfirm.com**.

Turner W. Branch, a principal and senior partner of the Branch Law Firm, retired as a 1st Lieutenant in the United States Marine Corps in 1968. He served on active duty in Camp Pendleton, California and at the Marine Corps Air Facility (MCAF) in Santa Ana, California. While at Camp Pendleton he served with the Second Battalion, Fifth Marines, First Marine Division (FMF) USMC.

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